



LUCKY ESCAPE ON A DAY TRIP

Report by Heather Large

"WE are incredibly grateful to be alive," says a Halesowen couple after a fir tree collapsed on top of their car as they returned from a day at the seaside.

Miraculously Kirran Jones, aged 33 and Gavin Davies, aged 34, escaped with only cuts and bruises.

The only warning the couple had before the tree came crashing down on the A438 in the Welsh village of Clyro was a cracking sound seconds before the fir fell.

Mr Davies immediately slammed on the brakes as the tree fell onto the bonnet and passenger side of the car.

Despite the windscreen being damaged by the impact, the couple were saved by the car's safety system and were able to escape through the doors.

The couple, of Apperley Way, had been returning from a trip to Tenby when the crash happened last week.

They received help from a villager who brought blankets to keep the shock couple warm. A female driver of a van stopped to provide Miss Jones with first aid.

Miss Jones, a teacher, was taken to Hereford County Hospital to be treated for bruises to her arms and chest.

In the aftermath of the crash, she said was 'completely in shock' and both struggled to come to terms with what had happened.

Miss Jones said they were still recovering from their ordeal but said they knew they had been lucky to survive.

"Both of us keep having flashbacks. We are both incredibly fortunate to be alive. I found the whole experience extremely traumatic."

She said she hoped the experience would become easier to cope with over time.



Grateful to be alive — Gavin Davies and Kirran Jones, with a picture of their Jaguar car which was crushed by a falling fir tree in a Welsh village

SCHOOL

Students get a real buzz from new business venture

STUDENTS from a school in Halesowen have set up an award-winning company which helps the country's bee population.

Windsor High School pupils Ellie Bryan, aged 17, Lauren Mullis, 17, Samarya Abid, 18, and 17-year-old Abigail Hetherington set up the Young Enterprise team called Beelieve.

They will sell bee houses, wax lip gloss sets and hand-made wax candles, with 10 per cent of their profits going to the Bumblebee Conservation Trust.

The team competed with seven other teams in the Black Country area final of the Young Enterprise scheme held at the University of Wolverhampton.

COLLEGE

£3m performing arts centre gets backing before crucial meeting

A £3 MILLION performing arts centre at Halesowen College finally looks set to be given the go-ahead after being recommended for approval. The college revised plans after it had to withdraw initial proposals over concerns raised by fire chiefs.

Fresh proposals were submitted in April and planning officers have recommended the revised application for approval ahead of a meeting of Dudley Council's planning committee on Monday. The two-storey centre will provide teaching rooms and rehearsal space for students.

The complex was due to be connected to other buildings at the Whittingham Road site by a glass walkway and exhibition site but fire officers said it was the main escape route in an emergency and had to be kept clear.

SHOPPING

Outdoors store to open at Merry Hill creating 80 jobs

ULTIMATE Outdoors will open a new store at Merry Hill next Saturday, creating around 80 jobs.

The firm, part of JD Sports, is taking over the old Kiddicare shop which has been empty since September last year.

Bosses have begun recruiting full and part-time workers for the store, which sells a range of outdoor clothing, equipment and accessories. Positions at the shop, which opens on May 23, include sales advisors, cycle technicians and cafe staff.

Work is under way to refurbish and fit out the premises ahead of the store's opening day. Rob Pickersgill, marketing manager at Intu Merry Hill, said: "We're very excited for the opening of Ultimate Outdoors, another great boost to the centre in what has been a very successful first year as Intu."

INSIDE

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Car thief badly injures elderly victim



Mr Stocking's injuries

A GRANDFATHER-of-three suffered horrific injuries after being mown down by a carjacker outside his own home.

Reginald Stocking was left lying in the middle of the street, with a broken eye socket, chipped skull and a bleed on the brain, after the brutal attack in West Bromwich.

The 78-year-old was returning home when he was hit over the head by the thief, who had been lying in wait as he parked his car.

Mr Stocking tried in vain to stop the thief stealing his Peugeot 207 by grabbing hold of the door but was knocked

over and forced against a wall before being dragged along the road.

Mr Stocking was taken to Sandwell General Hospital where yesterday (Wednesday) he remained in a poorly condition.

His son David, a 47-year-old scaffolder, said: "He can't remember anything. He doesn't know anything about the injuries he has got."

An initial scan had shown a small bleed on Mr Stocking's brain.

Mr Stocking had worked as a security guard for 20 years. He also spent 30 years as an engineer with Brockhouse

Transmissions in West Bromwich. Educated at Charlemont School in the town, he was also a local football referee for many years and even officiated at games involving West Bromwich Albion in the 1960s.

The vicious attack took place on Sunday at around 9.20pm when Mr Stocking returned from a night at the bingo at Mecca in Oldbury. He had just helped his wife Sylvia, aged 80, to the door and was parking in the garage behind his home in Old Meeting Street.

The light blue Peugeot 207 – registration BK60 LXN – is still missing.

Repair bill means it's last rites for St Luke's



St Luke's Church, High Street, Cradley Heath, which is destined for demolition because repair costs are too high

A CHURCH in the Black Country, which was forced to close due to a six-figure restoration bill, will be knocked down under new proposals.

St Luke's Church, in Cradley Heath, closed after almost 170 years of worship last October because of escalating repair costs, estimated at £750,000.

The congregation at St Luke's, in High Street, moved their services to St John's Church, in Dudley Wood, after the closure.

The Reverend Alicia Baker said it was disappointing that that the church had to be demolished but said there was little alternative.

She hoped that the land, including the churchyard, would not be lost for public use.

"It is a shame to see it that way but in the same way the church was unable to fund the repairs work, it has also been impossible to find anyone else to use it who have the money to do it up," she said.

"It could have been a concert hall, if there had been the need in Cradley Heath for it, as it had really good acoustics.

Vast

"If the site could be used as a community garden that could be a real positive," she added.

The Archdeacon of Dudley, Nikki Groarke said: "Every parish is responsible for the care and maintenance of their own church building.

"In this instance, the Parochial Church Council of Dudley Wood and Cradley Heath decided that sadly it was beyond their economic means to repair and maintain the vast St Luke's Church.

"The worshipping community continues at St John's, Dudley Wood, and the diocese supported the parish in their application for the closure of St Luke's.

"After seeking professional advice, demolition has been agreed as the best course of action, so that the

site can revert to churchyard use and continue to be a place of prayer and tranquility for the local community."

The Rev Baker said that the move to the new church had been a positive experience for the congregation.

Church members have also set

up Cradley Heath Community Link centre, also in High Street, where a range of social activities and support groups are now held.

Proposals for the church's demolition have been submitted to Sandwell Council's planning department.

A final decision on whether to grant the application will be taken in the coming weeks by the planners.

Built in 1847 on the corner of Corngreaves Road, St Luke's is one of the oldest buildings in Cradley Heath.

Ballot over steel strike in dispute on pensions

THOUSANDS of steel workers — including hundreds across the Black Country — have started voting on whether to take industrial action in a row over pensions.

Members of Community, Ucat and the GMB unions at Tata Steel will vote in the coming weeks on whether to launch a campaign of action in protest at plans to close the British Steel Pension Scheme to future accrual.

The unions are urging their members to vote in favour of strike action and for other forms of industrial action.

As well as steelmaking operations in South Wales and on Teesside, the firm's major distribution centre is at the Steel park in Wednesfield, where it employs around 600. It also has sites in Brierley Hill, Walsall and Wednesbury.

Roy Rickhuss, general secretary of Community, said: "Unfortunately there is no sign of Tata showing any willingness to work in a collaborative and co-operative spirit and re-enter meaningful discussions with the trade unions about the future of the British Steel Pension Scheme.

"To defend the hard-earned pensions of our members we have no choice but to ballot for industrial action.

"The unions were prepared to discuss changes that resolved the challenges faced by the scheme but Tata rejected that constructive offer."

A Tata Steel spokesman said: "We need to modify our final salary pension scheme because of the increasing deficit."

TV presenter at Songsters' concert

Television presenter Philippa Tomson, who is from Stourbridge, will be the compere for a Kingswinford choir's concert on Saturday.

The Gentlemen Songsters Male Voice Choir will be performing at Dudley Town Hall at 7.30pm.

The Songsters' special guests will be the Cradley Heath-based choir Voices In Harmony, formerly known as The Sandwell Community Choir.

Philippa Tomson is a former chief reporter with the Express & Star who began her career in journalism on the Dudley Chronicle.

She has also presented weather forecasts for Daybreak and GMTV.

Tickets for the concert are £10 and are available by calling the ticket hotline on 01746 763850.

More than 60 boats at pumphouse rally

A BOAT rally will be taking place this weekend when more than 60 boats gather at Birmingham Canal Navigation Society's HQ at Titford Pumphouse in Oldbury. On Saturday and Sunday there will be boat trips on the canal. The event is from 11am until 4pm on both days.

Three are acquitted of attempt to murder

THREE young men accused of attacking a man with baseball bat have been cleared of attempted murder.

A jury cleared Kasim Ali, aged 20, and two 17-year-old boys, who cannot be named for legal reasons, who were accused of attempting to murder 37-year-old father Tariq Mahmood.

They were also accused of attacking his 19-year-old stepson Ajmal Choudhary outside the pair's Dudley home in August. Mr Mahmood's serious injuries meant part of his skull had to be removed.

Following a two-week trial, a jury found Ali, of Aston Road, Dudley, and one of the teenagers not guilty on three charges — attempted murder, causing grievous bodily harm with intent, and assault occasioning actual bodily harm.

The other teenager was found not guilty of attempted murder and assault occasioning actual bodily harm.

After further deliberation, the jury found the teenager not guilty of causing grievous bodily harm with intent but guilty of the lesser charge of causing grievous bodily harm. He is due to be sentenced on June 5.

The court heard there had been a dispute between Mr Choudhary and one of the youths on social media website Instagram.

Prosecutor Mr Robert Pricetold the court that one of the teenagers had swung a baseball bat in the direction of Mr Choudhary, as his stepfather tried to intervene. Mr Ali said he had been attacked by Mr Choudhary when he visited the house in Hillcrest Road.

Plea for help to tackle grot spot

RESIDENTS are organising a litter pick to clean up fly-tipping trouble spot Lutley Lane in Halesowen.

All equipment will be provided for the community litter pick taking place between 8.30am and 1pm.

Volunteers are welcome, even if only for an hour, and will be provided with tea or coffee and cakes.

One of the organisers, Rachel Whitehead, said as part of the campaign against litter a Facebook page 'Lutley Lane Litter' had been set up.

She urged anyone who saw people in the act of fly-tipping to make a note of the vehicle registration number and report them to the council.

For further information email lut.leylitterpick@gmail.com

Fallen tree leads to road delays

A TREE fell onto a busy West Bromwich road, causing major delays.

The fallen tree blocked part of Newton Road in West Bromwich, near its junction with Forge Lane on Monday. It was cleared in time for rush hour.

Threat to bury pig at mosque site

THE leader of a far-right group threatened to bury a pig on the proposed site of a controversial mosque to religiously 'contaminate' the ground.

Britain First leader Paul Golding led 150 protesters through Dudley, where they were heckled by locals during the march.

The group targeted the town to 'show solidarity' over plans for a large mosque in Hall Street.

But Mr Golding said: "That mosque has not been constructed yet and I can tell you now it won't be.

"In previous cases like Seville in Spain, patriots, local residents, have buried pigs on the land. Contrary to what it says in the Koran, you can't build on swine-infested, contaminated land.

"We will take that action if necessary."

His members chanted 'Britain First fighting back' and held Union Flags aloft before coming to a halt at the borough's Council House.

Peaceful

The protest was largely peaceful, although police intervened on a few occasions.

But some people in the town centre made their feelings towards the group clear as they passed, telling them to leave Dudley, while some were visibly upset by anti-Islam speeches that were made on Saturday.

Police made no arrests and Britain First left after only a couple of hours. Around 100 officers had been drafted in to manage the march.

A counter demonstration was also held by anti-fascism groups, while a handful of military veterans confronted members of Britain First.

The roads in Dudley town centre remained open during the day and the march did not have the sort of negative trade impact the EDL's protest did in February. Dudley Council offered free parking in the town centre to encourage shoppers on Saturday.

Dudley Council chief executive Sarah Norman said that Britain First's visit would have no bearing on the ongoing High Court proceedings in relation to proposals for a mosque.

"Britain First can add nothing to the council's discussions in relation to the Dudley Muslim Association's proposed mosque in Hall Street," she added.

More needs to be done to tackle knife crime

MORE than half of all knife crime recorded in the West Midlands over the last four years remains unsolved.

Blades were used in hundreds of robberies, rapes and attacks across the region, as well as in high-profile murder cases such as those of Halesowen schoolgirl Christina Edkins and factory worker Tom Kirwan.

A Freedom of Information request has revealed that the 10,140 knife crimes reported to West Midlands Police between 2010 and 2014 — 6,231 remain unsolved. A total of 3,909 cases were solved by officers in that time.

The family and friends of victims say more should be done to address the problem.

Jade Elwell, whose 23-year-old fiancé Tom Kirwan was stabbed to death outside a Wolverhampton nightclub, said: "I hope someone can see these figures and realise that it is time to do something serious before it is too late."

Chris Melia, great uncle of knife victim Christina Edkins, said: "The man who killed Christina is now locked up but that doesn't solve the issue for us. He was only at large due to the failings of people in the health service and prison service. It was a needless death and work needs to be done to ensure this never happens again."

Detective Chief Inspector Kath Davis, West Midlands Police's chief officer for knife crime, said the possession of blades 'would not be tolerated'. She said: "West Midlands Police has invested heavily in campaigns and operations to tackle knife crime across the region over the past 10 years, which has led to a significant decrease over time in the number of offences recorded."

Fallen

"Since 2006 the number of offences has fallen dramatically and, despite an increase of around 150 offences between 2012 and 2014, we are now back on track to see a significant decrease in offending over the past year. Currently we are looking at a 116 fewer offences compared to the same period last year, which amounts to a 7.7 per cent decrease.

"As a direct response to listening to community requests, the Police and Crime Commissioner and Birmingham City Council launched the knife surrender last year, which we supported, seeing eight bins launched across Birmingham and Wolverhampton to reduce the number of bladed weapons on our streets.

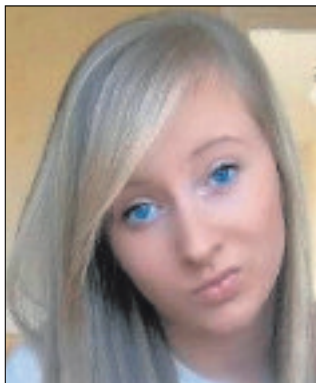
"This campaign continues alongside significant resources ploughed into educating youngsters about the dangers of carrying a knife."

Tom, a 23-year-old Wolves fan on a night out at Wolverhampton's former Uberria club, was murdered in 2012. It is still not known who struck the fatal wound, even though five people were locked up last year for their part in a street brawl during the lead-up to his death. His 24-year-old fiancée Jade Elwell has been campaigning on knife crime ever since.

Schoolgirl Christina Edkins was killed in 2013 during a motiveless knife attack on a Birmingham bus. The 16-year-old was studying for her GCSEs at Leasowes High School in Halesowen. She was murdered by paranoid schizophrenic, Phillip Simelane from Walsall. He is detained indefinitely.



The Birmingham bus on which Christina Edkins was stabbed to death by Phillip Simelane



Halesowen schoolgirl Christina Edkins



Christina Edkins' great uncle, Chris Melia

NEWS IN BRIEF

Best of British is choir's inspiration

A MIXED voice choir with 70 members is tuning up for a concert in Cradley Heath this weekend.

Viva Musica will be performing at the Salvation Army Citadel on Saturday.

The theme is British composers of contemporary choral music, and will include pieces ranging from John Rutter and Karl Jenkins to Paul McCartney and Elton John.

Tickets cost £9 available by calling 01562 883480 or 0121 550 5581. For details visit www.viva-musica.co.uk website or the choir's Facebook page.

Suspicion over huge factory fire

FIRE chiefs say a huge fire that destroyed a plastics factory in Oldbury may have been started deliberately.

The blaze, on April 29, burned for 16 hours at Teknor Apex on Tat Bank Road. At its height it was tackled by 75 firefighters.

Watch commander Jason Boyd, from Oldbury Fire Station, said: "The fire investigation officer saw evidence that it was possibly suspicious."

Roger Davies, operations manager at Teknor Apex, said he was determined that the blaze would not destroy the business.

Jobs and training in £1m scheme

ALMOST 130 jobs and dozens of training and education places have been created for young people in Sandwell since the launch of a £1 million scheme.

The Sandwell Guarantee is aiming to find paid work or training for at least six months for 4,000.

More than 100 firms have already signed up to be involved in the Sandwell Council project.

The council will split the cost of wages 50/50 for up to one year.

Printing firm shuts with 18 job losses

A PRINTING firm in Halesowen has closed down, making up to 18 staff redundant.

Formula Business Forms, in Bromsgrove Road, has shut and liquidators are to be appointed, though Wolverhampton-based Mazars is expected to be given the role.

Scott Bevan, a practitioner at Mazars, said: "The company has assessed its position and decided to close its doors. The position of the company is to make its staff redundant."

TOWIE stars at centre

STARS of The Only Way is Essex will be visiting the Merry Hill shopping centre on Saturday to launch a new fragrance inspired by a spin-off show.

Lauren Pope, Lydia Bright, Fearnie McCann and Georgia Kousolou will launch the Only Way is Marbs fragrance at 2.30pm in the lower mall.

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THE BEST OF PETER RHODES

COLUMNIST and curmudgeon Rod Liddle draws our attention to a survey which suggests women do not notice men over 50. Thank heavens. I thought it was just me.

OUR changing language. A priest in Baltimore, the Rev. Jamal Bryant, has denounced the use of the word "thugs" to describe rioters who are, he insists, no more than "upset and frustrated children." He says "thugs" is "the 21st century word for the N-word." Be the first in your circle of friends to tut-tut in a holier-than-thou way next time the T-word is used. Meanwhile in Scotland there is such sensitivity over the word "Huns," used to denounce rowdy Rangers fans, that you will find it referred to as "the H-word." We will be running out of alphabet soon.

I SENSED there would be trouble when the new World Snooker Champion Stuart Bingham reflected on the pure top. What did the title mean to him? "Everything," replied the champ. "Twenty years as a pro. Blood, sweat, and tears, on the road, qualifying in places like Prestatyn and Malvern – places like that." Sure enough, the Mayor of Prestatyn has duly taken offence and publicly declared: "We, the residents, are very proud of our town." I dare say you are, Madam Mayor.



But we all know exactly what Bingham was talking about, the separation, isolation and misery of staying in sterile, lookalike hotels in towns you don't know: the loneliness of the long-distance potter. Instead of the mayor going all hurt and defensive, how about doing something imaginative? Like offering Stuart Bingham the freedom of Prestatyn.

WHILE we all loved the suspense, does anyone seriously believe that the gender of the royal baby and her name were not known well in advance? The Royal Family is not a real family but an extremely slick marketing and investment corporation. The Windsors did not spend bank holiday weekend striding up and down the long gallery arguing about Victoria, Alice, Waynetta or whatever. I bet the name Charlotte was agreed weeks ago.

Don't miss Peter Rhodes every Monday to Friday in your Express & Star

Labour retains control in Dudley and Sandwell

LABOUR has retained its grip on Dudley Council but saw its majority fall as the Conservatives increased their share of the seats.

Labour now has 38 seats on the council – four fewer than before – with deputy leader and finance boss Stuart Turner the most high profile casualty.

He lost his spot to former councillor leader Anne Millward who was ousted from the Gornal seat by Mr Turner by just two votes in 2011.

It was one of five seats won by the Tories bringing their total up to 25, which Tory leader Councillor Patrick Harley said they would continue build on in future.

UKIP was unable to add to its seven seats and the Green party also failed to win anything, meaning it remains with one councillor.

One of the only two independent seats on the council turned blue with Conservative Jeff Hill taking the seat left vacant by retiring councillor Ken Turner.

There had been 24 seats contested across the borough. Council leader Pete Lowe admitted there had been 'a mixed bag' of results for Labour and said he believed the Dudley group has been 'adversely affected by the General Election picture'.

"I'm pleased we remain in overall control of the council but we have lost some very good councillors," he added.

Councillor Harley said he was pleased with the gains. "They have been fantastic results nationally and we

have had some good results in Dudley," he said.

Conservative Tina Westwood secured her father David Caunt's Sedgley seat after he stood down. Among Labour councillors celebrating was cabinet member for health Rachel Harris who kept her Brierley Hill seat.

Meanwhile, Labour strengthened its iron grip on Sandwell Council, winning all 24 seats up for grabs.

The Conservatives have been wiped out with the only remaining Tory, Anne Hughes, ousted by Labour's Elizabeth Giles.

Now there are 69 Labour representatives in the borough, two Independent Labour and one UKIP.

Council leader Darren Cooper thanked voters, saying: "It's quite clear that the people of Sandwell are very good to the Labour party and continue to have confidence and faith in us."

● **Dudley results, see page 12; Sandwell, page 15**

By Heather Large

Carnival royalty are crowned



Carnival monarchs students Shaun James and Grace Dunham

VOLUNTEERS are urging people to dig deep to support the revival of Halesowen Carnival – as organisers announce their festival king and queen.

Plans are gathering pace for the return of the popular carnival on July 4 at Huntingtree Park after an absence of more than 20 years.

The event is linking with this year's Black Country Day Festival. The event is also restoring a carnival tradition by naming its own king and queen to represent the revived Halesowen celebration. A-level students Shaun James and Grace Dunham, both aged 18, from Halesowen, were crowned at a fundraising event.

Shaun is a sixth form student at Windsor High School and Sixth Form Centre. His parents Tina and Dave James said they were proud he had been asked to represent the town.

Grace studies at King Edward VI College in Stourbridge and was nominated by her dance teacher Tracy Davies of Tracy Davies School of Dance.

Organisers will have a stall with information and donation buckets to help raise funds on May 23 in Halesowen town centre.

Off-duty police will step in to tackle yobs

OFF-DUTY police stepped in more than 50 times in the first three months of this year to help public transport users and staff deal with yobs.

West Midlands Police officers assisted train, bus and tram staff to deal with angry fare dodgers or people intimidating other passengers a total of 52 times.

Off-duty officers have also spoken to people smoking on buses and engaging in sexually explicit or offensive conversations.

Most interventions ended with people being removed from the service, while six people were arrested for public order offences.

Inspector Lee Gordon said: "West Midlands Police officers can travel for free on public transport by displaying their warrant card – it's a deal that means off-duty officers regularly travel unseen on transport and are on hand should tempers rise.

"In the majority of cases people immediately calm down and are compliant on realising they are face-to-face with a police officer, but on some occasions officers have been required to make off-duty arrests.

"Their presence deters crime and nuisance behaviour, while increasing public confidence in the safety and security of public transport."

Of the incidents, 32 were on a train, 15 on buses and five on the Midland Metro.

Sandwell Families Big Picnic



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Chamber want 'bold' move to devolve power

THE Black Country's leading business organisation is calling for 'bold' decisions from the new Conservative Government to help companies invest and grow.

The Black Country Chamber of Commerce is looking for more moves towards devolving powers to the West Midlands region, particularly in the key areas of skills and transport.

Black Country Chamber of Commerce president Ninder Johal said: "Businesses in all parts of the United Kingdom want to see a pro-growth, pro-enterprise programme, building on the positive steps taken, and lessons learned, during the Coalition years. The Conservatives now have a clear mandate to take bold and important decisions, and must use it to help British businesses invest and grow. In return, business stands ready to work with the new government to deliver prosperity, jobs and sustained economic growth. The political complexion of the West Midlands cannot result in missed opportunities for local businesses and we call on our local MPs to ensure the the UK continues to grow."

Kevin Rogers, vice president at the Black Country Chamber, said: "The election result may have been a surprise to some but the stability that the outcome potentially offers is welcomed by business."

Parks are hosting rounders sessions

ROUNDERS games are taking place at parks across Sandwell. Sessions are at Lightwoods Park, Bearwood, Brunswick Park, Wednesbury, and at Haden Hill Park in Cradley Heath.

The sessions at Haden Hill Park are on Thursdays, starting May 21. Sessions run from 6 to 7.30pm. At Brunswick Park it's on Mondays, Wednesdays at Lightwood.

Arrests made as police swoop on the stolen goods market

Albion legend is still Super Bob for fans



Harley and Hudson Butterworth meet legend Bob Taylor with Miss Black Country finalist Charlotte Homer

WEST Bromwich Albion fans packed into a bar in Cradley Heath to meet club legend Bob Taylor.

Taylor, known to Baggies fans as 'Super Bob', was at Jay's Bar in Graingers Lane to host a question and answer session - and also demonstrated his singing skills by getting up on the karaoke.

The former Baggies striker, whose 131 goals put him eighth on the list of the club's all-time top scorers, was

at the bar to support family friend Charlotte Homer's bid to become Miss Black Country 2015.

Around 70 fans snapped up tickets to meet the star, who spoke about his goalscoring exploits during his time at the club.

Charlotte, aged 22, said: "He was great, everyone loved him. He did a talk for half an hour about his time playing. They asked him about his best goals."

"He spent quite a while chatting to fans. He signed some people's stomachs. They loved it."

Taylor surprised a few supporters by doing his best Neil Diamond impersonation on the karaoke, singing one of his favourites Sweet Caroline.

Miss Black Country will be crowned on May 24. As part of duties as a finalist, Charlotte, of Awbridge Road, Netherton, has been raising funds for charity Beauty with a Purpose.

ELEVEN people were arrested when police stormed homes across Sandwell as part of a major crackdown on drug-related crime in the borough.

Around 100 officers swooped on properties during raids in Tipton, Rowley Regis, Oldbury, West Bromwich and Bradley.

The total of number of arrests made during the operation now stands at almost 50.

Chief Inspector Jane Parry said: "Unlike previous raids which have targeted suspected drug dealers, these warrants have focused on taking the market out of stolen goods in the borough."

"What we see in many places is that drug users steal and then sell their bounty to fund their drug addiction."

"This ranges from food items and toiletries shoplifted from stores, putting local businesses under pressure, to phones and bikes taken from children or even laptops stolen from homes and cars."

Charged

The Spring Safer Six operation has so far seen 44 people charged with drug and handling stolen goods offences. Several raids took place across the borough last month.

A 32-year-old man from Wyldes Crescent, Rowley Regis is being questioned on suspicion of handling stolen goods and a 21-year-old man from Wallace Road, Bradley, was arrested on suspicion of supplying a controlled drug.

A 21-year-old man from Middlemeadow, Tipton, was arrested on suspicion of being concerned in the supply of a controlled drug and a 28-year-old man from Hartlebury Road, Oldbury, on suspicion of handling stolen goods.

Ladies boost charity help on dementia

A CHARITY which supports dementia sufferers in the Black Country has received a huge boost following a £1,500 donation from a generous group of ladies.

Better Understanding of Dementia in Sandwell (Buds) is the latest charity that the Guru Nanak Nam Ladies Jatha has chosen to support.

Members have given cash to more than a dozen charities in recent years. The charity was selected after one of the ladies became aware of BUDS in her role as a volunteer at Stone Cross Library in West Bromwich.

The charity runs regular clubs which enable sufferers to get out of the house and socialise.

It also affords carers some time to take a break from looking after family members around the clock, offers home visits and works with the fire service, leisure centres and other organisations to make Sandwell 'more dementia friendly'.

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IN MY VIEW
with Mark Andrews

Why defeat at election is difficult to swallow

IMMEDIATELY after the BBC exit poll predicted that the Liberal Democrats were on course to lose dozens of seats at the General Election, former party leader Paddy Ashdown responded: "If this exit poll is right, I will publicly eat my hat."

Not to be outdone, former Labour spin doctor Alastair Campbell announced he would eat his kilt.

So, given that we all know that politicians never break their promises, we can all look forward to a lot of clothes-eating over the coming few days.

Although in the case of Mr Campbell, I do make one request.

Yes I know what the old Scottish tradition is, but on this occasion nobody will hold it against you if you choose to break with convention.

Please, please Alastair, make sure you wear some underpants.

ONE of the strangest, and most poignant scenes of the past few days was watching the VE Day service on Friday, where Prime Minister David Cameron joined soon-to-be-ex party leaders Nick Clegg and Ed Miliband, as well as Democratic Unionist leader Peter Robinson and the SNP's Nicola Sturgeon in laying their wreaths at the cenotaph.

What did these people say to one another? Just hours before, they had been fighting to the bitter end for their differing objectives, and using some pretty colourful imagery along the way.

And there they were, all facing very different futures after the public had delivered its verdict, and in two cases representing their political parties for the very last time.

I actually found it rather touching, and will confess to a little grudging respect to Messrs Miliband and Clegg for conducting themselves with such dignity.

It can't have been easy appearing so publicly with their opponents after such an uncomfortable night.

But serves as a reminder of how fortunate we are to live in a country where political opponents will graciously put on a united front when it comes to honouring our dead.

When it comes to having a pop at the political classes, I love to have a pop as much as the next man, but we are all very privileged that we have the freedom to do that.

Seventy years ago, Britain celebrated a triumph of freedom and democracy over narrow authoritarianism, of free and robust debate over intimidation and suppression.

Whatever your views on the outcome of the election, we should all be grateful that we had the opportunity to take part in it.

And acknowledge the role of those brave soldiers who ensured it was possible.



Iwona Stachura sorts out the stock at Cash4Clothes



Staff sift through clothes brought in by Chris Haynes



The Cash4Clothes unit in Hollies Park Road, Cannock

Cash in on clothes to join a growing trend

An entrepreneur has fashioned a recycling initiative which is now becoming big business.
MARION BRENNAN reports

"PEOPLE try little tricks, like wetting the clothes so that they weigh more, but mostly customers are fine. We get all sorts of labels, from Primark to Armani. We're only concerned that they're reusable."

So says Christian Farnell, chief executive of Cash4Clothes which now has 30 outlets across the UK, mainly in the Midlands, in the ever-growing textile recycling industry.

Charity shops, eBay, textile banks – today there are more ways than ever to get rid of your unwanted clothes, and the newest trend, which sees people getting paid for their cast-offs, is now big business.

In 12 months Cash4Clothes has paid out more than £3 million to the public for their unwanted garments. In Cannock alone in the last four years that figure is £5.5m.

"It's a very big business and it employs a lot of people in different countries," says the 31-year-old, of Willenhall, a former Great Wyrley High School and Cannock College student.

Truckloads

The company pays 50p a kilogram for textiles, which generally works out at a fiver a bin bag, which it then sells on to customers in Eastern Europe. One trader in the Czech Republic has 12 shops, another has 11 stores in Poland and Slovenia. Around 16 truckloads, each with 18 tons of clothes aboard, leave their HQ in the Hollies Business Park, Cannock every month headed for the continent.

At the end of the journey, the East European merchants pick out the best clothes – the loads also include bags, shoes, belts and underwear – to sell in their shops, then bale the remainder and sells it on to traders in Africa.

So whatever option people choose, their old



Cash4Clothes chief executive officer Christian Farnell, aged 31, from Willenhall in the trading unit at Cannock

clothes, even those freely donated, will generally end up in the hands of a specialist group or textile merchants.

Cash4Clothes was started in 2010 by Darren Coggins, born and raised in Stafford, who launched European Textile Recycling Limited 23 years ago.

The canny entrepreneur, now 49, started out in house clearance, working mainly with local councils. Always one step ahead, he moved into textile banks, operating 500 sites at the height of the business before selling to JMP Wilcox, one of the UK's largest textile reclaimers.

Christian Farnell, whose CV includes In-Shops in Cannock and working as operations manager for Tesco, looking after 300 stores in Poland and Hungary, describes his boss as

"very forward-thinking". He said: "He flipped the textile banks idea on its head. Instead of paying the council for the use of their tip sites, he pays the public. If they want, they can track what happens to their clothes, where they go, who benefits. He was the first to do it – others have followed but he's the biggest."

Research shows that in Kenya alone more than five million jobs and ancillary posts have been created in the second-hand clothing industry, from people unloading the containers, tailors altering the clothes, stallholders selling at market and landlords leasing premises.

The firm's Midland interests include shops Dudley, Kidderminster, Rugeley, Lichfield, Stafford, Stone, Walsall, Wolverhampton, Willenhall, and Aldridge.

All sorts of clothes are accepted, as long as

they are clean and undamaged. "I think things are changing," says Christian. "People are recycling more and more. Everyone's got clothes that are too big or too small that they want to get rid of and if they know they can get paid for it, they're even more inclined to do it."

"They can still choose to give the money we pay them to charity. I think the public are split. Either they want to the feel-good factor of giving to charity shops or they're not that way inclined."

"We set up in places where people are less well-off and might need the money."

"Sometimes people come in because they haven't got enough cash to top up the electricity meter. We still do a lot of work with charity shops, they buy stock from us, we have a lot of trading arms. We just provide another option."

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Concern over impact of rapeseed crop

THE benefits of rapeseed oil to the economy as a bio-fuel are well documented. It is also being promoted as a healthy cooking oil, but there is a disturbing element to this pernicious import when it is grown in close proximity to populated areas. Check it out by Googling 'rapeseed allergies'.

Reactions include asthma-like symptoms, skin rashes and itching, sore eyes, watery eyes and headaches. Take it from me, suffering from several of these symptoms is a very unpleasant experience.

In Wall Heath we were once sur-

rounded by beautiful fields of corn and traditional crops, but now we have fields of rapeseed within yards of the Maidensbridge estate and adjacent to the Charterfields estate.

Rapeseed is present within half a mile of nearly all the schools in Kingswinford and Wall Heath, but the effects of the harmful chemicals emitted by rapeseed flowers can be felt miles away.

I have raised this matter with MPs, but with no response. We have a right to breathe clean air again and it is time that the Ministry for the Environment

recognised this problem and banned the growing of rapeseed within close proximity of populated areas.

We will know quite soon which government is really backing the people and which one cares only about commercial matters by their response to the rapeseed problem. If you live in the Kingswinford area, or anywhere close to rapeseed fields and you suffer from these symptoms, please join me in my quest and write to your MP about this issue.

M CLIFF
Wall Heath

Whistling at girls is a compliment

I HAVE noticed with interest the story of the girl who reported workmen giving her a wolf-whistle and the police are looking in to it.

I would have thought the police had much more important things to deal with than this. This is not anything sexual and surely should be taken as a compliment.

I am 79 years of age and do not of course get wolf whistles nowadays, but I remember when I was in my teens getting wolf whistles, and I remember telling my uncle (who I was visiting at the time) about it and he said 'Don't worry about that, the time to worry is when you don't get wolf whistles anymore', and we just had a laugh about it.

So personally, and in my opinion, I think it's 'much ado about nothing' and should be taken I'm sure as it was meant - a compliment.

A WILLIAMS
Tipton

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

POST

Dudley Chronicle,
Chronicle Editorial,
51-53 Queen Street
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EMAIL

dudley.chrons@
expressandstar.co.uk

Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

Footbridge would solve road problem

RE 'Club HQ is in wrong place', Letters May 7.

What a ridiculous comment to make. We don't need statements of this sort telling us how busy Manor Way is become. I am sure the majority of local and residential folk of that area already know.

How on earth can Peter Hodson suggest that the Halesowen Cycling and Athletics Club is in the wrong place and should find a new site. Can we remind Mr Hodson that the club has been on that site for 60 years plus.

I am sure that the members realise that its not just for their benefit but also for ALL the people, residents and anyone who have to cross over the road in that area.

I have noticed that the borough have recently given permission to spend 1.3 million pounds to revamp local pathways and cycle routes, surely a project of this nature can extend to Manor Way by introducing a safer crossing area.

Why not a footbridge which could include both steps and flat pathway for cycles and wheelchairs. I am sure all would consider this, providing it is in keeping of the surrounding area.

MIKE RUSTON
Halesowen

Miss Smith really did Cilla proud

I FEEL I must write to complain regarding comments printed in Pick Of The Week in The Chronicle on May 7.

Whoever wrote the comment saying the (brilliant) actress Sheridan Smith did not look or sound like Cilla Black (in TV drama-documentary Cilla) was not, in my opinion, watching the same drama as myself.

She had had singing lessons every day and also displayed her mannerisms perfectly. Well done Sheridan, you did Cilla proud.

MRS M A BRADLEY
Lower Gornal

Time for one limit on road

WHY has the road from M5 junction 3 to Grange Road island got three speed limits? Obviously motorists ignore this, so why don't we put in one speed limit along the entire stretch at 30mph? Motorists are not the priority - safety is.

GAIL WORSEY
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Along with the chance to sit in the cockpit of the iconic Jaguar aircraft, still based at RAF Cosford, there will be a unique line-up of Search and Rescue helicopters and the iconic TSR

2 jet. The flying displays will feature the best of the modern day Royal Air Force, classic aircraft and set pieces and will also pay tribute to other special anniversaries including the 70th Anniversary of Victory in Europe, the 90th Anniversary of the University Air Squadrons and the 50th Anniversary of the cancellation of the TSR 2 prototype supersonic aircraft.

RAF Cosford is the largest aviation event in the Midlands and is renowned for the huge variety of attractions on the ground with an indoor craft fair, funfair and this year an exciting 'Victory Village' authentically recreating a village green street party in 1945.

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We should put our veterans first



POLITICIANS are often accused of living in their own little bubble and no more so than when it came to VE Day.

The 70th anniversary was overshadowed by the outcome of the General Election.

Had the date been down to a snap decision by the Prime Minister to call it then that might have been in some way forgivable. But it was etched in stone like one of Ed Miliband's pledges years ago by the passing of the Fixed Term Parliaments Act.

Ever since the Coalition came to power in 2010 we have known that the date of the General Election would be May 7, 2015.

Dominated

But we have also known ever since May 8, 1945 the date on which we would mark seven decades since Nazi Germany's surrender. The brave men and women who sacrificed everything so that we may live as a free nation deserved better than this.

Of course the General Election was essential. Of course it was absolutely right that the coverage in the news be dominated by the question of who will form our government.

But I find it difficult to accept that all those experts and politicians, all those people so well paid to ensure the British constitution is upheld, failed to tackle this and act accordingly to ensure VE Day would be appropriately marked.



The Queen at the end of a Service of Thanksgiving at Westminster Abbey

Because if the Fixed Term Parliaments Act is not repealed, then the next General Election will be held on the same day in 2020, the eve of the 75th anniversary.

Age has begun to take its inevitable toll on the soldiers and servicemen to whom we owe our way of life. Many may not be here for the 75th or 80th anniversaries. But this country made a promise that we would remember them.

To think that we are so ungrateful as to begin to forget them while we still have the honour of having them among us does not bear thinking about.

The Fixed Term Parliaments Act was meant to introduce a form of stability but it's actually very messy. Had David Cameron been clinging to

power as predicted, rather than the result we got he might have wanted a second election. And whether you like the Tories or not, it would have been hugely complicated to try to trigger it.

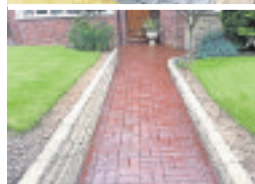
One way would have been for a motion of no confidence to be passed. If, within 14 days of that, no-one could have got a motion of confidence passed in the existing or new government, then an election would have had to follow 17 working days later. The only other way permitted was if more than two thirds of the House of Commons voted to call an election.

That would have meant 434 of all 650 MPs, not just two thirds of those present at the time. And you can imagine how MPs in marginal constituencies would have felt about facing another campaign if they only just about crossed the line.

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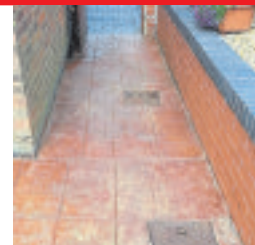
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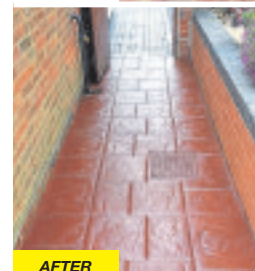
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Speaker's family link is explored

MyTime Over Fifties

THE April meeting heard a talk from Nigel Metcalfe entitled "The Man who Mapped the Arctic" - Sir George Back.

Mr Metcalfe's interest in Sir George arose while tracing his family tree. He discovered Sir George was fourth great grand uncle on his father's side.

Sir George was a naval officer who helped in the mapping of the Canadian Arctic with John Franklin. In 1808, during the Napoleonic wars, he enlisted, aged 12, as a volunteer into the navy on board HMS Arethura. He was captured by the French in April 1809 and remained as a prisoner of war in Verdun until 1814.

During this time he was taught French, navigation skills, maths and developed his artistic skills, all of which helped prepare him for his life ahead.

Following the end of the Napoleonic wars, the hunt was on for the North West Passage around Canada. Sir George took part in five expeditions to find, explore and map the Canadian northern coast. During his last expedition his ship was trapped in pack ice for nearly 10 months. Because of the hardships endured his health deteriorated. In 1839 he was knighted and became involved with the Royal Geographical society to maintain a lifelong interest in Arctic exploration.

The next meeting is on May 27 at 2pm in the Amblesote Room at Stourbridge Town Hall and will feature an "Afternoon of Chocolate" with Ms Jackie Smith.

Spotlight falls on ironmaster and MP



James Foster was the topic of the talk

THE Society meets at the Community Centre, High Street, Kingswinford.

The speaker at the May meeting was Roy Peacock who talked about James Foster, the Stourbridge Ironmaster.

He was a partner in John Bradley and Co and formed the Foster, Restrict Co that became famous for building The Agenoria, the steam locomotive that ran on the Kingswinford Railway, not far from where the evening's meeting was held and also the Stourbridge Lion, the first steam locomotive to run in the USA.

Foster became an MP in 1830, although



The steam locomotive Agenoria

Kingswinford and District Historical Society

he never spoke in the House of Commons. He was known as a good employer and was responsible for building Stourbridge Town hall and Amblesote Church.

The next historical society meeting is on Monday, June 1 when Max Keen, suitably attired, will talk about The Battle of Agincourt.

All are welcome, further details from Ron Julian 01384 295848.

Members taken round world

Quarry Bank E TG

The recent art and craft display was very successful and a member of the federation will be going to the AGM at Glasgow to represent the West Midlands TG.

Social Secretary Mrs M Writtle gave information regarding the visit to The

Lodge. The speaker was Alan Hill, on Around the World. This was a very interesting talk, illustrated with slides, including Hong Kong, Australia, Hawaii and San Francisco.

The meeting concluded with the serving of tea and biscuits.

The May 19 ameeing will include a Bring and Buy.

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It's a moving farewell to Burma Star hero Walter



Members of the Royal British Legion lead the hearse into Gornal Wood Crematorium for the funeral of veteran Walter Carr

THE life of a Black Country war hero, who received the Burma Star medal for his service in the Second World War, was remembered at his funeral.

Walter Carr, who died aged 96, was given a big send-off at Gornal Wood crematorium, with representatives of the Royal British Legion and the Burma Star Association attending.

Mr Carr, who was raised in Church Lane, Tipton, was in the Royal Marines from 1939 to 1945 when he served in Burma and the Middle East.

His son Stephen, 65, who lives in Coleford Close, Wordsley, described his father as a family man with a passion for politics, who was also a huge fan of singer Shirley Bassey.

The Burma Star medal was received for his service in the brutal Burma campaign against the forces of Imperial Japan.

Union

After leaving the military, Mr Carr worked at the Austin car plant in Longbridge and later worked at Brymill Foundry, where he was active in the steelworkers' union.

He is also survived by two daughters who live in Canada.



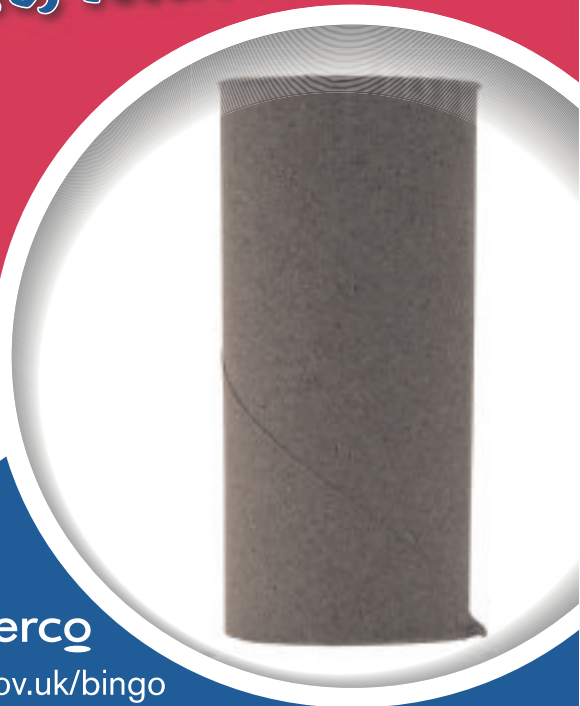
Royal Marine Walter Carr

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Results in your constituency

Dudley North
 Rehan Afzal (Apni) 156
 Ian Austin (Lab) 15,885
 Will Duckworth (Green) 517
 Bill Etheridge (UKIP) 9,113
 Mike Collins (Lib Dem) 478
 Les Jones (Con) 11,704
 David Pitt (Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition) 139
 Result: Labour Hold Majority: 4,181
 Turnout: 62.6%

Dudley South
 Paul Brothwood (UKIP) 7,236
 Vicky Duckworth (Green) 970
 Natasha Millward (Lab) 12,453
 Martin Turner (Lib Dem) 828
 Mike Wood (Con) 16,723
 Result: Conservative Hold Majority: 4,270
 Turnout: 63.3%

Stourbridge
 Chris Bramall (Lib Dem) 1,538
 Jim Carver (UKIP) 7,774
 Margot James (Con) 21,195
 Christian Kiever (Green) 1,021
 Pete Lowe (Lab) 14,501
 Result: Conservative Hold Majority: 6,694
 Turnout: 66.6%

Halesowen and Rowley Regis
 James Morris (Con) 18,933
 John Payne (Green) 849
 Stephanie Peacock (Lab) 15,851
 Dean Perks (UKIP) 7,280
 Peter Tyzack (Lib Dem) 905
 Result: Conservative Hold Majority: 3,082
 Turnout: 59.1%

South Staffs
 Lyndon Jones (UKIP) 8,267
 Kevin McElduff (Lab) 9,107
 Claire McIlvenna (Green) 1,298
 Gavin Williamson (Con) 29,478
 Robert Woodthorpe Browne (Lib Dem) 1,448
 Result: Conservative Hold Majority: 20,371
 Turnout: 58.9%

One Labour victory as Tories keep three

By Andrew Turton

TORIES were all smiles as they held onto their seats in Dudley borough while Labour's Ian Austin was re-elected with an increased majority.

Stourbridge, Dudley South and Halesowen and Rowley Regis all remained blue while Mr Austin successfully held off a challenge for his Dudley North seat.

A delighted Margot James held onto her Stourbridge seat with a majority of 6,694.

"I am very honoured that trust has been placed in me for a second term," the MP said.

Mike Wood was elected as Dudley South's new Tory MP replacing the outgoing Chris Kelly. The MP retained the Conservative seat after polling 16,723 votes.

"I am absolutely delighted," said Mr Wood. "It is a huge responsibility and a great honour. I look forward to working hard for local people and will start straight away."

James Morris celebrated keeping Halesowen and Rowley Regis with an increased majority, saying: "I made history at the last general election by being the first Conservative MP to be elected to any part of the Sandwell borough and now



Labour's Ian Austin gives his victory speech after the Dudley North election count at Dudley Concert Hall



Thumbs up at the Cornbow Hall as Conservative James Morris hears he has been re-elected

I am very proud to have been re-elected in a seat that Labour targeted."

In Dudley North, Ian Austin held onto his Labour seat and

also increased his majority. At the 2010 election he secured a slim 649 majority but this time round retained his seat with a majority of 4,000. "I want to

thank the people of Dudley for giving me the opportunity to serve the town for another five years. It is a massive honour and a great privilege," he said.



A kiss for the winner — Conservative Mike Wood gets a smacker from wife Laura



Jubilant Margot James, centre, celebrating holding her Stourbridge seat with supporters

Results in your ward

Amblecote
 Sikandar Ahmed (Lab) 1716, Christian Kiever (Green) 238, Pete Lee (UKIP) 1,776, Simon Tyler (Con)* 3079
 Con hold

Belle Vale
 Liz Keenan (Lab) 2,533, Graeme Lloyd (UKIP) 1,279, Simon Phipps (Con)* 2,728, Gemma Thompson (Green) 329
 Con hold

Brierley Hill
 Gordon Elcock (Green) 275, Rachel Harris (Lab)* 2,351, Carl Owen (UKIP) 1,409, Kamran Razzaq (Con) 1,429
 Lab hold

Brockmoor & Pensnett
 Sue Greenway (Con) 1,593, Jennifer Hill (UKIP) 1,374, Karen Jordan (Lab)* 2,069, Ben Sweeney (Green) 127
 Lab hold

Castle and Priory
 Ken Finch (Lab)* 3,011, Alexander Kendall (Green) 202, Daryl Millward (Con) 1,481, Philip Winiett (UKIP) 1,695
 Lab hold

Coseley East
 Martin Duffield (Con) 1,399, Jon Hartless (Green) 158, Melvyn Motttram (Lab)* 2,276, Craig Winyard (UKIP) 1,684
 Lab hold

Cradley & Wollescote
 Richard Body (Lab)* 2,602, Alan Hopwood (Con) 1,704, Dennis Neville (Green) 218, Lee Sargeant (UKIP) 1,425
 Lab hold

Gornal
 Anne Millward (Con) 2,443, Andrew Parsons (UKIP) 2,203, Stuart Turner (Lab)* 2,292, Ryan Virgo (Green) 124
 Con gain

Halesowen North
 Nathan Hunt (UKIP) 1,288, Ian McGarry (Lab) 2,337, John Payne (Green) 231, Karen Shakespeare (Con)* 2,497
 Con hold

Halesowen South
 James Apperley (UKIP) 1,148, Derek Campbell (LD) 293, John Lewis (Lab) 1,815, Alan Taylor (Con)* 3,633, Tim Weller (Green) 219
 Con hold

Hayley Green & Cradley South
 Michael Forsyth (UKIP) 1,222, Malcolm Freeman (Lab) 1,840, Jeff Hill (Con)* 2,879, Colin Royle (Green) 242, Adrian Turner (Independent) 366
 Con hold

Kingswinford North & Wall Heath
 Lynn Boleyn (Lab) 1,944, Luke Harrison (Green) 196, Karl Reynolds (UKIP) 1,553, Nicola Richards (Con)* 3,672
 Con gain

Kingswinford South
 Vicky Duckworth (Green) 326, Peter Hillman (UKIP) 1,356, Peter Miller (Con)* 3,828, Shaz Saleem (Lab) 1,678
 Con hold

Lye & Stourbridge North
 Mohammed Hanif (Lab)* 2,143, Asan Mishaq (Con) 1,937, Andi Mohr (Green) 218, Wendy Wilde (UKIP) 1,646
 Lab hold

Netherton, Woodside & St Andrew's
 Stephen Daniels (UKIP) 1,474, Bill McCormish (Green) 1,288, Chris Neale (Con) 1,201, Qadar Zada (Lab)* 2,113
 Lab hold

Norton
 Pam Archer (Green) 414, Mike Cranage (Lab) 1,527, Vic Hanson (LD) 429, David Powell (Con)* 3,795
 Con hold

Pedmore & Stourbridge East
 Julie Baines (Lab) 1,673, Simon Hanson (LD) 357, Sabina Heywood (UKIP) 1,035, Ian Kettle (Con)* 3,862, Liz Tilly (Green) 254
 Con hold

Quarry Bank & Dudley Wood
 Martin Cotterell (Green) 259, Jackie Cowell (Lab)* 2,072, Dean Horton (UKIP) 1,750, Tim Wood (Con) 1,660
 Lab hold

Sadgley
 Marcia Harris (UKIP) 1,874, Emma Harrison (Green) 193, Sue Ridney (Lab) 1,779, Tina Westwood (Con)* 2,914
 Con hold

St James's
 Adrian Crossen (Green) 186, Mary Roberts (Lab)* 2,641, Phillip Rowe (UKIP) 1,642, Jack Spriggs (Con) 1,388
 Lab hold

St Thomas's
 Christian Green (Green) 258, Lila Redfern (Con) 918, Glenis Simms (Lab)* 3,351, Helen Winiett (UKIP) 1,310
 Lab hold

Upper Gornal & Woodsetton
 Doreen Ameson (Con) 1,864, Adam Aston (Lab)* 2,256, Daniel Brookes (Green) 154, Fiona Evans (UKIP) 1795
 Lab hold

Wollaston & Stourbridge Town
 Steve Clark (Con)* 3,075, Serena Craigie (Lab) 1,956, Margaret Hason (LD) 406, Maxim Lowe (UKIP) 1,141, Lawrence Rowlett (Green) 461
 Con gain

Wordsley
 William Cody (Lab) 2,071, John MacLeod (UKIP) 1,623, Catherine Maguire (Green) 161, Matt Rogers (Con)* 3,007
 Con hold



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Yoke's on Tony if he expects an egg for his breakfast

SPECKLED hen Becky left her owners shell-shocked when she laid an egg-strange tiny egg the size of a 20p piece.

Tony Sutton, aged 71, of Lavender Road, Dudley, discovered the miniature egg between two regular sized ones.

Mr Sutton, said: "I was so shocked when I discovered this tiny little egg. It is so unbelievably small."

"I have been breeding birds for a long time but I have never come across one like this."

Since discovering the egg, Mr Sutton has been taking precautions to make sure it is kept safe.

He added: "I would never dream of cracking it open. I have just been keeping it wrapped up safe in the fridge. I do not want to get rid of it."

Mr Sutton has been breeding

chickens for more than 20 years and has had Becky for two and a half years.

He added: "She has been laying for around nine months now. She seems fine, I am sure that there is nothing wrong with her health."

Mr Sutton is yet to have the egg measured because he is worried about breaking it.

Even though the Guinness Book of Records does not publish records of the world's smallest hen's egg.

Mr Sutton added: "I cannot measure it myself, it is simply too small and I would be too scared of accidentally breaking it."

Prior to breeding birds, Mr Sutton and his wife Jean, 63, ran a number of pubs and social clubs across Dudley and Rowley Regis before they both retired.



A disappointing breakfast? Tony Sutton, of Dudley, with the tiny egg that was laid by Becky the Hen

Get-togethers will help plan the big day

A BRIDAL event at Dudley's historic Priory Hall is being repeated to help brides-to-be plan their big day.

Last month's get-together has prompted superintendent registrar Penny Fulford to organise a free series of events through the summer and autumn.

The next 'girls only' event takes place on Thursday, May 21, between 5pm and 7pm and is aimed at brides-to-be and their mums and potential bridesmaids.

Registrars will be on hand to answer any questions, to book ceremonies, discuss options and take payments. There will also be a selection of 'once worn' bridal gowns available. Confetti cones, order of ceremony leaflets, invitations and certificates will also be on display.

Penny Fulford said: "Brides-to-be can really get in the mood for their big day by coming along to Priory Hall where they may already have booked their marriage ceremony. Our Grade 2 listed building is metres from the Priory ruins and overlooked by Dudley Castle - the perfect setting for a memorable day."

Other events will take place on June 25, July 23 and September 3 at 5pm.

Canalside homes are likely to get green light

PLANS to build 60 homes in Tividale as part of a new canalside development were to get the go-ahead this week.

The site, known as Rattlesnake Chain open space, is earmarked to be redeveloped by Cameron Homes Limited. It was formerly part of the urban forest.

Proposals for the development, alongside the Gower Branch Canal, were submitted to Sandwell Council and have been backed by officers. The scheme was recommended for approval and a final decision was due to be made by councillors at a meeting yesterday (Wednesday).

If given the green light, the development will include 22 four-bedroom properties and 30 three and two bedroom homes.

There will also be eight affordable homes built.

There have been five letters of objection lodged with the council ahead of the plans being discussed by councillors. Some residents are concerned about the loss of the site, which they say is 'a haven for wildlife' and well-used by the community. There are also fears about potential noise, pollution and traffic.

Planning officers at Sandwell Council says it is a suitable development for the site.

A report submitted by Ian Burns from Cameron Homes Limited says: "The development will provide 60 dwellings ranging from two-bedroom terraced to four-bedroom detached suitable for a range of needs which will add to the community of residents and will

By Heather Large

help generate a vibrant and active family development.

"It is important to reflect the local context of Tividale; building heights will range from single storey garages to three-storey split level dwellings which will cascade down the levels on the eastern boundary and provide a focal point to the canal."

Through discussions already held, the council has been able to secure a £50,000 lump sum payment from the developers.

Cycle

Access for cars and pedestrians would be from Palmerston Drive and there would be 146 car parking spaces and 60 cycle spaces provided.

A total of 54 properties would be available on the open market with six reserved for social and intermediate rent.

The site had formed part of a refuse tip until the 1970s since when homes have been built on much of the land and the rest has been left as open space.

Water company's volunteers on Beacon

VOLUNTEERS have been sprucing up a Black Country beauty spot by restoring hedgerows.

Workers from South Staffs Water have also been sowing wildflowers and clearing litter during the project at Sedgley Beacon.

A team have been working alongside the Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country.

Alex Martin, from South Staffs Water, said: "The day at Sedgley was a great opportunity to get out of the office to see and physically participate in what we are trying to do through our biodiversity and community engagement strategies. There was some hard work to be done but it was also great fun."

South Staffs Water plan to continue their work at Sedgley Beacon, helping the Wildlife Trust to realise their plan of returning the beauty spot to Site of Special Scientific Interest status.

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CLEARANCE £999	STEED TOWCESTER Classical small sofa, easy chair & scatterers 75% OFF TO CLEAR! Was £4069 Save £3070	TCS CAMILE Large sofa with twin jumbo powered recliners & recliner chair in IT cream leather 55% OFF TO CLEAR! Was £3580 Save £1981	CLEARANCE £1599	CLEARANCE £99	MORRIS PALOMA Model MER8105 light oak nest 60% OFF TO CLEAR! Was £249 Save £150	NOLTE SALERNO Tall 5 draw chest 70% OFF TO CLEAR! Was £549 Save £385	CLEARANCE £164
CLEARANCE £879	WELBECK HOUSE LOPEZ Large chaise sofa & chair in aqua blue contemporary plain fabric with scatterers LESS THAN HALF PRICE TO CLEAR! Was £2129 Save £1250	SITBEST SLOGEN Model S Scandinavian styled swivel power recliner chair in Paloma Merlot OVER 55% OFF TO CLEAR! Was £1965 Save £1100	CLEARANCE £865	CLEARANCE £199	BAKER GERONA Contemporary styled GE10 coffee table in rich walnut finish OVER 80% OFF TO CLEAR! Was £539 Save £340	JULIAN BOWEN Avis king-size double faux leather bed-frame 63% OFF TO CLEAR! Was £399 Save £250	CLEARANCE £149
CLEARANCE £399	ROM FIONA Contemporary accent chair, scatter cushion & stool set in slate grey fabric 60% OFF TO CLEAR! Was £985 Save £586	ESSENTIALS VENEZIA Contemporary accent chair group in Pellissio brown faux leather OVER 86% OFF TO CLEAR! Was £1499 Save £1000	CLEARANCE £499	CLEARANCE £249	FURNITURE ORIGINS CLEVELAND Model CB001 1st bookcase in rustic smoke oak finish 60% OFF TO CLEAR! Was £629 Save £380	SILENTNIGHT Mattress Now 'roll up' Foam double mattress 75% OFF TO CLEAR! Was £419 Save £314	CLEARANCE £105



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Shops and gardens hit by thefts

A SPATE of thefts have taken place at shops and from outside homes in Blackheath prompting a police investigation.

Neighbourhood officers said that 10 thefts had taken place in a single week between April 18 and May 2 around the town.

Offenders targeted stores in Oldbury Road with chocolate bars and razor blades among the goods to be taken.

Two thefts took place from shops in Long Lane including a two bottles of aftershave being taken.

Other stores in Throne Road and High Street.

Meanwhile, plants were taken including a rose bush from Avenue Road and a front garden of an address in Oldbury Road.

It is unclear at this stage if the thefts were linked. Anyone with information can call police in 101.

Talk to police in store cafe

RESIDENTS can speak to police officers at a surgery in Blackheath on Friday, May 22.

People can raise issues and get advice from the team between 11am and 12pm. The surgery will take place at the cafe in Sainsbury's in Halesowen Street.

Police recently raided addresses across the borough, including Rowley Regis, as part of an operation to smash the stolen goods market.

FOCUS ON BLACKHEATH AND ROWLEY REGIS

Nearly 300 homes are being planned for old quarry site

NEARLY 300 homes will be built on a disused quarry in the Black Country under a 30-year blueprint to transform the site.

A huge waste management facility would also be built on the site of the Edwin Richards Quarry in Rowley Regis, if the scheme goes ahead.

FCC Environment is leading the project to transform the quarry, which has lain dormant for more than ten years.

The firm claims it is offering a 'realistic and deliverable restoration' of the site.

It is hoped the homes will be built by the beginning of the next decade but the overall project could take up to 30 years.

It would also include a major waste facility site and gas utilisation plant, plus a waste vehicle depot would also be built.

The company hopes the quarry will eventually be turned into a green space for use by residents.

Regenerate

The proposed development would regenerate the land and provide an extension for Rowley Regis, bosses add.

The 281 homes would be built on the southern end of the site.

FCC said it was not 'practical, sustainable or desirable' to leave the site as it is.

In a statement, it said: "The site as it stands pre-

By Richard Guttridge

sents health and safety management issues in terms of public access and has limited end-use to the wider public."

A design and access statement submitted with the plans stated: "The new homes will create a cohesive neighbourhood that will be well connected to, and integrated with, existing residential areas and can take advantage of local services in the immediate area, at Lion Farm and in nearby Blackheath centre.

"The scheme will enable the phased delivery of high-quality market homes with local play areas, informal open space and sustainable urban drainage systems, creating a landscape and ecological framework that retains valued natural features and links the site to the wider green network and footpaths."



Neil Clifton, MD of Cube Precision Engineering, with Mark Meakin, from Lloyds Bank

Engineering firm takes on workers

A ROWLEY Regis engineering business has secured more than £500,000 funding to speed up its manufacturing process to meet increased demand.

Cube Precision Engineering designs and makes press tools and machine components for aerospace, automotive and defence companies.

It approached long-term banking provider Lloyds Bank Commercial which provided £460,000 of asset finance to support the purchase of two new milling machines.

Additional funding of £115,000 was secured through the Regional Growth Fund which supports businesses.

The purchases have enabled Cube Precision Engineering to speed up its manufacturing process by 30 per cent. The company, which has a turnover of around £4 million, has also taken on four extra workers.

Depot site company taken over

A GIANT transport group, which ran a depot in Rowley Regis until a year ago, has been bought by a US business in a £2.3 billion takeover deal.

US-based XPO Logistics is buying French owned Norbert Dentressangle to give it a foothold in Europe.

The Lyon-based logistics group as 662 sites across Europe and 42,350 employees - 14,600 of them in the UK.

The company also ran a depot at Doulton Road, Rowley Regis, but shut it down in May last year, with the loss of 140 jobs. It moved its work to Northamptonshire and the site has been sold for housing.

It runs a specialist site at Brownhills employing 50 people and the huge Sainsbury's frozen food depot at Stone, where around 250 work.

It also has warehouses at Tamworth and Telford.

Book group for children

YOUNG bookworms can join a reading group at Blackheath Library.

It takes place on the last Saturday of the month for children aged six and over. Each month a different book is chosen and youngsters receive an activity book relating to the book. They then discuss what they thought about it at the next meeting. Free sessions run from 11am until 11.45am. Call 0121 559 1884 or email blackheath_library@sandwell.gov.uk

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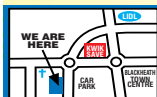


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Take it as red, a Labour clean sweep

15
Halesowen Chronicle Thursday, May 14, 2015

LABOUR may have suffered a bruising election night nationally, but the party made a clean sweep in Sandwell, retaining all three parliamentary seats with Tom Watson, John Spellar and Adrian Bailey all securing a comfortable re-election.

Receiving almost 19,000 votes, Mr Watson held the traditionally labour strong West Bromwich East.

The Conservatives' Olivia Seccombe was the best of the rest, beating Ukip by a little over 1,000 votes.

It was close between the Tories and Ukip across Sandwell as the two battled it out to be second best.

A jubilant Mr Watson – who says he will consider standing for Labour's deputy leader after Harriet Harman announced she would step down from the role – promised to put the constituents of West Bromwich East first.

Outcome

He said: "I pledge first and foremost for the constituents of West Bromwich East and will fight for them in Westminster.

"I am delighted that people have stuck by me on this unusual election night when you could never predict what the outcome would be."

Mr Watson holds a majority of more than 9,500 over the Tories who received 9,347 votes.

There was a big thumbs up from John Spellar as he once again elected MP for Warley.

The 67-year-old held onto the safe Labour seat with a massive majority of almost 15,000.

Mr Spellar, who received a total of 22,012, thanked the voters who had chosen to stick by him and said he looked forward to serving them in the coming years.

The Conservatives came second with 7,310 votes, narrowly beating Ukip, who scored 6,237.

The Liberal Democrat vote collapsed, with the party receiving just 805 votes in Warley, fewer than the Greens, who got 1,465.

After his victory was announced Mr Spellar, who has served the Warley ward since its formation in 1997, said: "I am very pleased to have substantially increased my majority.

"It reflects the warmth of feeling I have experienced on the streets.

"I never take it for granted and I think that's the point, you have to campaign for votes and provide a service to the community."

There were loud cheers from Labour supporters as Adrian Bailey held onto his seat in West Bromwich West, polling 16,578 votes.

Mr Bailey, who held the seat with a majority of almost 8,000, said: "I am absolutely delighted.

"I am grateful for the public's support. They have been very loyal over the years and now hopefully I can repay that," he said.

There was disappointment for Conservative candidate Paul Ratner whose 8,365 votes put him third behind Ukip candidate Graham Eardley who scored 8,836.

He was jeered for calling for a change to the current voting system. But he reflected on a positive night for the party – and insisted there was more to come.

He said: "Second place is an excellent result considering where we were 10 years ago.

"I'm grateful to everyone who turned out and voted and it's something for us to build on. This is a firm foundation.

"I believe there will be no safe Labour or Conservative seats in 2020."



John Spellar is delighted after being returned as the Labour MP for Warley



Tom Watson MP retained his Labour parliamentary seat for West Bromwich East



MP Adrian Bailey made a clean sweep for Labour in Sandwell as he kept his West Bromwich West seat

SANDWELL COUNCIL

Abbey

Keith Bracey (Green) 482, Steve Eling (Lab)* 3,386, Richard Kemp (Con) 952, David Perry (UKIP) 745, Lynn Wadding (TUSC) 89. Lab hold

Blackheath

Debbie Elwell (Con) 1,696, Ian Keeling (UKIP) 1,336, Robert Price (Lab)* 2,418. Lab hold

Bristnall

Robert Buckman (Green) 340, Shirley Ching (Con) 1,127, Carol Gault (Lab)* 2,468, Judith Malan (UKIP) 1,437. Lab hold

Charlemont with Grove Vale

Elizabeth Giles (Lab) 2,358, Anne Hughes (Con)* 2,068, John Macefield (Green) 235, Graham Nock (UKIP) 1,429. Lab gain

Cradley Heath and Old Hill

Pete Durnell (UKIP) 1,190, Benjamin Groom (Green) 169, Robert Johns (LD) 163, Stephanie Palmer (Con) 1,404, Anne Shackleton (Lab)* 3,041. Lab hold

Friar Park

Joy Edis (Lab)* 2,204, Daniel Parkes (UKIP) 1,466, Robert White (Con) 936. Lab hold

Great Barr with Yew Tree

Murray Abbott (Green) 139, David Fisher (UKIP) 1,444, Shirley Hosell (Lab)* 2,498, Sadie Smith (LD) 650, Hilary Taylor (Con) 1,557. Lab hold

Great Bridge

Peter Allen (Lab)* 2,240, Ray Crawford (UKIP) 1,548, Kate King (Green) 138, Steve Simcox (Con) 863. Lab hold

Greets Green and Lyng

Michael Allen (Green) 135, Nick Hanney (UKIP) 971, Gurcharan Sidhu (Lab)* 2,811, John Vickers (Con) 611. Lab hold

Hateley Heath

Pat Davies (Lab)* 2,803, Lyn Horton (UKIP) 1,508, Neil Price (Green) 134, Sandra Vickers (Con) 784. Lab hold

Langley

Brian Crockett (UKIP) 1,314, Yvonne Davies (Lab)* 2,573, Derran Stokes (Con) 1,004, Jayne Wilkinson (Green) 174. Lab hold

Newton

David Hosell (Lab)* 2,674, Steve Latham (UKIP) 1,292, Tony Ward (Con) 1,608. Lab hold

Old Warley

Trevor Crumpton (Lab)* 2,599, Bryan Manley-Green (LD) 186, John McHard (Con) 1,670, Baljinder Singh (UKIP) 1,028, Theresa Yates (Green) 274. Lab hold

Oldbury

Suzanne Hartwell (Lab)* 3,255, Aaron Luxton (Con) 964, David Westwood (UKIP) 1,007, Katie Young (Green) 226. Lab hold

Princes End

Steve Jones (Lab)* 1,784, Ric Keeling (UKIP) 1,608, Keith Vaughan (Con) 869. Lab hold

Rowley

Zac Colledge (Con) 1,325, Clive Hayward (UKIP) 1,477, Barbara Price (Lab)* 2,483. Lab hold

Smethwick

Stephanie Buckman (Green) 345, Keith Davies (Lab)* 3,621, Jitendra Maini (UKIP) 862, Suki Nandra (Con) 605. Lab hold

Soho and Victoria

Umar Azeemi (UKIP) 292, Roger Horton (Lab)* 4,506, Sedouh LeGrand (Green) 225, Dan Mathias (Con) 463. Lab hold

St Paul's

Zahoor Ahmed (Lab)* 4,487, Satwinder Attri (UKIP) 482, Richard Toye (Con) 698, Antony Wilkinson (Green) 257. Lab hold

Tipton

Donald Griffiths (Con) 1,113, Syeda Khatun (Lab)* 2,715, Mike Stanyer (UKIP) 1,589. Lab hold

Tividale

Lorraine Ashman (Lab)* 2,447, Ben Bebbington (Green) 142, Kevin O'Keefe (UKIP) 1,445, John Stockall (Con) 1,052. Lab hold

Wednesbury North

Elaine Costigan (Lab)* 2,814, Heather Nightingale (Con) 1,125, Mark Redding (Green) 123, Les Trumpeter (UKIP) 1,097. Lab hold

Wednesbury South

Olwen Jones (Lab)* 2,769, Jane Keeling (UKIP) 1,511, Michael Middleton (Con) 1,021. Lab hold

West Bromwich Central

Bawa Dhallu (Lab)* 3,696, Margaret Macklin (Con) 930, Aldo Mussi (Green) 184, Jasbinder Rama (UKIP) 747. Lab hold

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So proud and aiming higher



Discovery through investigation

COMMERCIAL FEATURE

OLD Hill Primary School – now officially a Good school and 'Aiming Higher Every Day'

Staff, pupils and governors are extremely proud and delighted to report the 'GOOD' judgement from our latest Ofsted inspection in March

2015. The Leadership team and governors, enthusiastically supported by all staff have all worked vigorously to improve life chances for every one of our pupils.

And to quote one of our year 6 pupils: "Old Hill Primary School is a great place to learn, make friends and have fun and aim higher every day."

It hasn't always been an easy journey, but I am delighted to say the majority of our children, parents and carers have supported us all the way. Ofsted arrived eight days after I had taken up the position as a very proud new Head-teacher.

Eager

I was informed the school could fail Ofsted just because the attendance was so low. We also had to improve standards in literacy and numeracy, presentation of the children's work and the quality of teaching? The journey had begun!

The staff were eager and ready to take on the challenge. We had a small, but very enthusiastic leadership team that has developed and strengthened over the last five



Challenge and teamwork at Edgmond Hall Residential

years, together we monitored and scrutinised lessons, children's work and attendance.

Our challenge was to set higher standards and improve the teaching, so we shared the good practice already in school supporting and teaching each other, we also looked to the training and support our local schools offered.

It was amazing seeing the children's, and parents' pride, as standards improved and they started to succeed and make real progress.

There is no one size fits all at Old Hill Primary School, our children and families are unique and have different needs. Therefore, I am

delighted that we now have a full time Parent Support Advisor. This has made a real difference to many of our families, from a cup of tea and a chat to helping with housing issues and running our very popular Changes course.

We have also established our Nurture Class, for children who are not yet ready for the rigour of a full-time classroom. We find that a short spell in Nurture makes a real difference.

I believe that one of the biggest barriers for children is the poverty of expectation, at Old Hill we aim for every child to achieve their full potential, therefore I was delighted that Ofsted recognised that

'disadvantaged pupils make good progress' at Old Hill. We are always looking to find opportunities to enrich our curriculum, from off-site and residential experiences, Forest School, after school clubs and inter-school competitions, swimming from year 2 upwards, securing funding for a climbing wall in the playground (summer 2015) and more than 1,000 new books going into classrooms as I write.

Pupils are happy and proud to attend Old Hill Primary, and I am proud to be their Head teacher.

Old Hill Primary is now striving relentlessly towards Outstanding, together we can do it!



Line up of Albion Ambassadors at WBA



March 2015

It's official... Ofsted say....

We are now a "Good" school!

"The headteacher and other senior leaders have improved the quality of teaching"

"Teachers set work that is challenging"

"Pupils behave well in lessons and outside"

"Pupils achieve well throughout the school"

"The school keeps its pupils safe"

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Prolific thief of cars and fuel is jailed for 18 months

VE Day celebrated in style at museum



Hundreds flocked to the VE Day street party held at the Black Country Living Museum to make the anniversary

CELEBRATIONS marking the 70th anniversary of Victory in Europe in the Second World War continued through the weekend. The streets of the Black Country were decorated with bunting and marked with fun and commemorations.

Just as the whole of England came together to mark the defeat of Nazi Germany on May 8, 1945, a new generation paid tribute to those who lost their lives.

One major event to mark the VE Day anniversary was at the Black Country Living Museum in Dudley where a giant street party was held.

A street party and stirring speeches entertained a crowd of 1,500 people to mark the special occasion. Re-enactors gave the VE Day commemorations a taste of 1945 and families enjoyed the street party, while Winston Churchill look-alike Robert Burns from Walsall recited Sir Winston's speeches. Spam fritters were on sale in the fish and chip shop, with the Tipton Road museum festooned with bunting and vintage cars took to the cobbled streets.

Brierley Hill sport wheelchair group taking over rival

THE makers of the wheelchairs for Great Britain's paralympic basketball team has been bought by a Black Country firm in a multi-million pound deal.

Founded more than a quarter of a century ago by former paralympian Greg Eden and wheelchair basketball player Russel Simms, Burntwood-based RGK has grown into one of the world's leading designers and manufacturers of bespoke wheelchairs.

Mr Simms and Mr Eden, both left disabled by car crashes, met as wheelchair basketball internationals. They designed lightweight made-to-measure wheelchairs for sport. The com-

pany makes wheelchairs for athletes across the world, including the Union Jack chairs used by GB's paralympic basketball team at the 2012 London Olympics.

RGK now makes around 1,500 chairs a year at its Burntwood factory, where it employs 40 and has turnover in excess of £3m a year. It has been bought for an undisclosed sum by Brierley Hill-based Sunrise Medical to become part of the bigger company's sports product arm. It is understood Greg Eden has resigned as a director following the deal but Russel Simms is staying on as RGK's commercial director.

A THIEF who stole cars and petrol from across the Black Country has been locked up.

Jamie Brookes, 27, fitted stolen licence plates to vehicles before targeting garages throughout the region in nine raids last year. The father-of-three pinched petrol and diesel worth £720 between July and September at stations in Oldbury and Great Bridge as well as Quinton, Great Barr and other places in Birmingham.

Even when Brookes was arrested on suspicion of theft on September 22, he went out the very next day to strike again.

He was jailed for 18 months at Wolverhampton Crown Court.

Brookes was in a stolen Citroen when he and an accomplice drove to NJC Motors in Smethwick to steal an Astra valued at more than £6,000. He

By Carl Jackson

claimed he was carrying out the thefts on someone else's instructions and was being paid each time.

Brookes, of Poplar Road, Bearwood, was also convicted for six counts relating to driving without insurance and a licence for which he was disqualified from driving for two years.

Video

He appeared at the sentencing hearing via video-link from HMP Hewell in Worcestershire. He had been given a nine-week prison term for separate petrol theft offences last year.

Judge Amjad Nawaz said it 'beggars belief' that magistrates chose to sentence Brookes for those crimes instead of sending the matter to crown court for all the offences to be dealt with together.

He added: "When you were arrested

you went out the next day and committed the same offence. That shows you are somebody who simply will not comply with any order given to you.

"Maybe you can't say no to others. Unfortunately you will have to grow up and steel yourself.

"If you don't you will serve longer and longer sentences.

"The sheer volume of your offending means there is no other option than an immediate custodial sentence."

Jasuir Mann, defending, said Brookes had left school without any qualifications and had found it hard to keep down steady employment.

The barrister added: "He is a man easily led by others and by the age of 27 he should have sufficient backbone to say to these people he no longer wants to associate with them.

"The reality is he has given in to pressures, but he has also been a willing participant, but not a man that instigates things on his own."

Discount store creates 40 jobs in Black Country

AROUND 40 jobs will be created when discount shop B&M Stores takes over a vacant unit at Wednesbury's Gallagher Retail Park.

The new branch will open at the former Decathlon premises next Saturday. Work is now under way to refurbish and fit out the premises.

The new store is the latest boost for the popular retail park and follows the announcement of plans to give the site a £5million revamp to attract more shoppers to the busy complex.

Adam Porter, store manager at B&M Wednesbury said: "B&M is committed to recruiting from the local area and I am delighted we've found a great team from in and around Wednesbury.

"We're really proud to be creating 40 jobs across the town this year and playing our part in the local community."

"We are excited to get the doors open on May 23 and look forward to providing great value products and world class service to customers."

Construction

From only 21 stores and one distribution centre in 2004, B&M has now grown to four distribution centres as well as more than 400 stores across the whole of the United Kingdom.

Plans to revamp Gallagher Retail Park include the creation of three restaurants, leading to around 150 jobs. If planning permission is given, work could start in six months.

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Full English farewell is flawless

The Full English
Town Hall, Birmingham
AMID the songs about cannibalism and disastrous weddings there was a hint of sadness about the gathering of The Full English in the Second City.

Partly because it would be the last time they would play the superb venue as a group and partly because there were only three more gigs left in their farewell tour.

The group was put together by

The group was put together by

Not Rotten
but show is
no classic

Dirty Rotten Scoundrels, New Alexandra
THIS eager-to-please comedy-musical won over audiences at Birmingham, despite unfamiliarity with its songs.

Based on a 1980s movie and on tour with a new cast after a year in the West End, it worked best as a comedy. It packed in gags both witty and rude in a story about connen cheating rich women on the French Riviera. Former Robin of Sherwood actor Michael Praed shone as the vain and delonair older fraudster, while ex-Hear'Say singer Noel Sullivan stole lots of scenes as his crude younger rival.

The songs, in a variety of styles, seemed designed as vehicles for humorous lyrics rather than memorable tunes.

Mark Benton, using dancing skills picked up in *Strictly Come Dancing*, gave likeable support as a crooked French police chief with 'Allo 'Allo accent. Hollywood actress Carley Stenson had star quality as the scamsters' intended victim. The show is on to Saturday.

Leon Burakowski

musician and academic Fay Hield to promote the Full English database, an online resource of nearly 60,000 items of folk music and British musical heritage.

Hield, Martin Simpson, Seth Lakeman, Nancy Kerr, Sam Sweeney, Rob Harbron and Ben Nicholls showed how the music and information available could be turned into exquisite tunes.

They opened with *Awake Awake*

with Hield providing the strong and sharp lead vocals helped along wonderfully by Kerr and the full ensemble. Among the offerings were Simpson's Creeping Jane and Lakeman's William & Nancy.

As you would expect with a stage filled with experts in their respective instruments the music was flawless and the fantastic acoustics in the ornate building did their sound justice.

Danny Farragher

REVIEWS



Jessie Hart and Lewis Kirk star in Dirty Dancing at Birmingham Hippodrome until May 23

Audiences having the time of their lives with Dirty delight

Dirty Dancing, Birmingham Hippodrome
FOR those who missed the tour of the stage adaptation of the cult classic *Dirty Dancing* last summer, there is still a chance to catch the show as it shimmies into the Hippodrome until May 23.

Baby Houseman's feminist dreams are challenged on a family holiday when she falls in love with dance teacher Johnny Castle. It would be considered sacrilege to tamper with the original script but fans can rest easy knowing that director Sarah Tiptle has stuck rigidly to the tried and tested format, to produce the perfect version of the movie as a piece of live theatre.

The show is all about the dancing and this superbly entertaining cast display extraordinary technique throughout, offering the audience the Time of Their Lives from the opening to one of the best loved finales. It is wonderful to see local lass, Jessie

Hart from Wall Heath, play the iconic role of Baby to absolute perfection, bringing just the right mixture of innocence and allure to her performance. She certainly had chemistry with Lewis Kirk as Johnny. Claire Rogers gives a mesmerising performance as Penny, almost stealing the show with her dance moves, not to mention the longest legs in the business!

Alison Norton

Blur whip up a treat for the fans

ALBUM REVIEWS

By Leon Burakowski

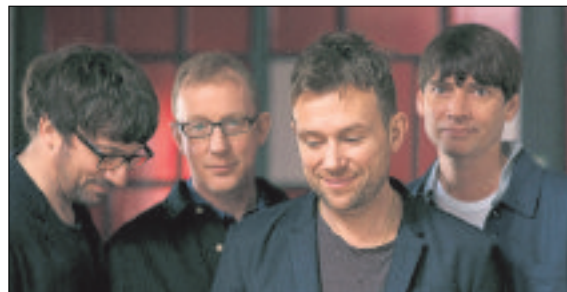
BLUR fans must be grinning from ear to ear after hearing the Britpop sensations (southern section) return on their comeback album *The Magic Whip*.

The last Blur album, *Think Tank* in 2003, was missing Graham Coxon but he's back to provide the ying to Damon Albarn's yang on this album recorded in Hong Kong — so fans get a balance of Albarn's experimental tendencies with Coxon's surefooted sonic dynamism. Highlights include Lonesome Street, with Albarn back in cocky Cockney mode and the trademark Blur of 1 Broadcast. It's the tracks hinting at 21st century angst, *There Are Too Many Of Us* and *Pyongyang* that really hit home.

Rabble-rousing rock 'n' roll is the speciality of **Palma Violets**, somehow splicing together the punk ethic of The Clash with the rhythm and booze of The Faces and The Libertines' loose appeal on their second album **Danger At The Club**. Right after the pensioners' sing-along opener, the London band's intention is apparent on the swaggering Hollywood (I Got It). Other prime cuts include the Kinks-ish Peter & The Gun and Coming Over To My Place.

It sounds like **Django Django** are anticipating another summer of love on this art school outfit's second album, **Born Under Saturn**, which brims over with psychedelic pop delights. There's a hint of 'Madchester' on First Light and an air of Kula Shaker (remember them?) about Found You. If you like such new psychedelic pop outfits as The Temples and Tame Impala, don't hesitate, get Born Under Saturn now.

Californian trio **Mini Mansions** (in-



Blur are back with their first album in 12 years, picture: Linda Brownlee

cluding Queens of the Stone Age bassist Michael Shuman) pay homage to the 1970s in a hi-tech 21st century way on their second album **The Great Pretenders**. Opening with the T Rex meets Goldfrapp stomp of Freakout! the golden years of glam inform a set of likeable songs which wear their influences — ranging from Bowie to Sparks via ELO — with pride. Guest singers include Alex Turner from Arctic Monkeys and former Beach Boy Brian Wilson.

Former Beatles drummer **Ringo Starr** has an enjoyable nostalgic time on **Postcards From Paradise**, particularly on Rory And The Hurricanes as he recalls his pre-Beatles rock 'n' roll band. Starr mates help out on guitar, including Joe Walsh, Dave Stewart and Peter Frampton. It adds up to pleasant if unmemorable soft rock excursion.

Welwyn Garden City trio **The Subways** mark ten years since their debut with a fresh-as-a-daisy blast of punk-pop energy on their self-titled fourth album. The thrashing yet melodic sound features a welcome contrast of vocals from Billy Lunn and bassist Charlotte Cooper. Despite the band's English

small town roots, this is firmly in the American tradition, so should appeal to fans of Fall Out Boy, Green Day and All Time Low. The most exhilarating track is I'm In Love and It's Burning My Soul (now that's an emo title) and the catchiest is the should've been a chart-topper Taking The Blame.

Liverpudlian indie popsters **The Wombats** are eager to please with their third album *Glitterbug*, packing more hooks than an anglers' shop and with lots of surging guitars and bubbling synths. The irreverent humour of their earlier albums — this was the band that sang about dancing to Joy Division — is largely missing from this slick offering. Includes the Euro dance-floor friendly Give Me A Try.

Tyneside sisters **The Unthanks** (Rachel and Becky) are firmly in the folk tradition but their beautiful voices must surely find a wider audience with **Mount The Air**. They do not betray their Northumbrian heritage but their melancholy sound with its spiritual core has an appeal beyond a single genre. Songs such as Magpie send a shiver down the spine.



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**Is this the
noisiest
band
in Britain?**

God Damn
– Page 21



Clare Teal

See Page 21

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Desi Rockstars



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Barclaycard Arena, B'ham
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 Symphony Hall, Birmingham, B1 2EA. Call 0121 780 3333

Elio Pace performs
 Sat at 7.30pm, £15 - £19
 Palace Theatre, Redditch, B98 8AE. Call 01527 65203

Take That
 Fri, Sat at 7.30pm,
 £61.20 - £94.20
 Genting Arena, Birmingham, B40 1NT. Call 0121 780 4141

Bryan Ferry
 Wed at 7.30pm, £35 - £65
 Symphony Hall, Birmingham, B1 2EA. Call 0121 780 3333

The Neil Diamond Story
 Wed at 7.30pm, £12 - £15.75
 Palace Theatre, Redditch, B98 8AE. Call 01527 65203

Gin Annie Band
 Fri at 7.30pm, £8.50 - £10
 The Robin 2, Bilston, WV14 7LJ. Call 01902 401211

Rock 4 Spon 4
 Sat at 7.30pm, £6 - £7
 The Robin 2, Bilston, WV14 7LJ. Call 01902 401211

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 Fri at 6.30pm, £13.50
 O2 Academy Birmingham, B1 1DB. Call 0121 622 8250

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 Sat at 7.30pm, £10
 Newhampton Arts Centre, Wolverhampton, WV1 4AN. Call 01902 572090

Quadrophonia Night
 Sat at 8pm, £14 - £16
 Artrix, Slideslow Drive, Bromsgrove, B15 1PQ. Call 01527 577330

Marcia Griffiths & Friends
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 O2 Academy Birmingham, B1 1DB. Call 0121 622 8250

J. Cole plus Pusha T, Jhene Aiko
 Fri at 7pm, £35.01 - £39.51
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Swervedriver
 Fri at 8pm, £16.87
 O2 Academy Birmingham, B1 1DB. Call 0121 622 8250

Slaves
 Mon at 7pm, £10.00 Adv
 The Institute, Digbeth, Birmingham, B5 6DY. Call 0121 643 0428

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Traditional Music Sessions
 Sun at 8pm,
 Prince Of Wales, Moseley, Birmingham, B13 8EE.

The Jigantics
 Thu at 8.30pm, £5
 Pelsall Cricket & Sports Club, Walsall, WS13 4BP. Call 01922 682018

Lucy Spraggan
 Sat at 6pm, £14.50 Adv
 The Institute, Digbeth, Birmingham, B5 6DY. Call 0121 643 0428

Sandpiper Folk Club Night
 Wed at 7.45pm, £2
 Pigot Arms, Pittingham, WV6 7BQ. Call 01902 700207

CoCo & The Butterfields
 Sun at 7.30pm, £10
 Hare & Hounds, Kings Heath, Birmingham, B14 7JZ. Call 0844 870 0000

Brewwood Acoustic Club Singers' Night
 Thu at 8pm, £2 (£1 singers)
 Brewwood Cricket Club, ST19 9HX. Call 01902 850422

Tom Paxton - 50 Years On
 Sat, Sun at 7.30pm, £26.50
 Birmingham Town Hall, B3 3DQ. Call 0121 780 3333

Irish Session
 Wed at 8pm, Free
 Katie Fitzgerald's, Wollaston, Stourbridge, DY8 3TB. Call 01384 374410

Breabach
 Sat at 8pm, £10 - £12
 mac, Cannon Hill Park, Birmingham, B12 9QH. Call 0121 446 3232

JAZZ & BLUES

Paul Lamb & The Detroit Breakdown
 Wed at 7.30pm, £10 - £12
 The Robin 2, Bilston, WV14 7LJ. Call 01902 401211

The Harp Live Jazz (May)
 Sun at 12pm - 2.30pm, Free
 The Harp Hotel, Albrighton, Wolverhampton, WV7 3JF. Call 01902 374381

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 The Glee Club, Birmingham, B5 4TD. Call 0871 472 0400

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 Prince Of Wales Centre, Cannock, WS11 1DE. Call 01543 578762

Clare Teal
 Sat at 7.30pm, £19.50
 Birmingham Town Hall, B3 3DQ. Call 0121 780 3333

CBSO Parsifal
 Sun at 3pm, £25 - £55
 Symphony Hall, Birmingham, B1 2EA. Call 0121 780 3333

Takács Quartet
 Tue at 7.30pm, £9.50 - £35
 Birmingham Town Hall, B3 3DQ. Call 0121 780 3333

THEATRE

Dirty Dancing
 Fri, Sat, Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu at 7.30pm, Wed at 2pm, Sat at 2.30pm, £20 - £55
 Birmingham Hippodrome, B5 4TB. Call 0844 338 5000

Sex in Suburbia
 Sat, Sun at 7.30pm, £18 - £24.90
 Lichfield Garrick, WS13 6HR. Call 01543 412121

Something Else
 Fri at 11am, £5
 Arena Theatre, Wulfruna Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 1SE. Call 01902 321321

Ghost
 Fri at 7.30pm, Sat at 2.30pm, £15.50 - £21.50
 Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, WV1 1DE. Call 01902 573320

Twelve Angry Men
 Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu at 7.30pm, Wed at 2.30pm, £10.50 - £27
 Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, WV1 1DE. Call 01902 573320

Pygmalion
 Fri, Sat at 7.30pm, £9.50 - £12
 The Rose Theatre, Kidderminster, DY10 2RX. Call 01562 743745

Yamato Drummers
 Sun at 7.30pm, £16.90 - £30.90
 New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham, B5 4DS. Call 0844 871 3011

Judy - The Judy Garland Story
 Thu at 7.30pm, £12.90 - £38.90
 New Alex, Birmingham, B5 4DS. Call 0844 871 3011

The Rise And Fall of Little Voice
 Fri, Sat at 7.30pm, Mon, Wed, Thu at 7.30pm, Tue at 7pm, Thu at 2pm, £7 - £35
 Birmingham Repertory Theatre, B1 2EP. Call 0121 236 4455

Dirty Rotten Scoundrels
 Fri, Sat at 7.30pm, Sat at 2.30pm, £15.50 - £53.40
 New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham, B5 4DS. Call 0844 871 3011

The Long Road
 Fri, Sat at 7.45pm, Sat at 2.45pm, £6 - £11
 The Crescent Theatre, Birmingham, B16 8AE. Call 0121 643 5858

Kiss Me Kate
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Blood
 Tue, Wed, Thu at 8pm, £8.50 - £13.75
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Chewing The Fat
 Fri, Sat at 8pm, £9 - £15
 Birmingham Repertory Theatre, B1 2EP. Call 0121 236 4455

Cardboard Citizens: Benefit
 Fri at 8pm, £10 - £12
 mac, Cannon Hill Park, Birmingham, B12 9QH. Call 0121 446 3232

Births, Deaths and Marriages
 Wed at 7.30pm, £4 - £6
 Arena Theatre, Wulfruna Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 1SE. Call 01902 321321

Birmingham Cabaret Festival
 Fri, Sat at 8pm, Wed, Thu at 8pm, £10
 The Old Joint Stock, Birmingham, B2 5NY. Call 0121 200 1892

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 Birmingham Town Hall, B3 3DQ. Call 0121 780 3333

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 Fri at 7.30pm, £23 - £23.75
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Thu at 7.30pm, £23 - £23.75
 Palace Theatre, Redditch, B98 8AE. Call 01527 65203

An Evening with Gervase Phinn
 Thu at 7.30pm, £17.50 - £19.50
 Stafford Gatehouse Theatre, ST16 2LT. Call 01785 254653

Henning Wehn: EINS, ZWEI, DRY
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The Baby Show with madeformums.com
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 The NEC Birmingham, B40 1NT. Call 0121 780 4141

The Robin 2 Record & CD Fair
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 The Robin 2, Bilston, WV14 7LJ. Call 01902 401211

Open Mic Night
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 Katie Fitzgerald's, Wollaston, Stourbridge, DY8 3TB. Call 01384 374410

Check out full listings in **the ticket** in Friday's Express & Star

Big noise from the Black Country

THE latest big noise out of the Black Country, drum and guitar duo God Damn, will unleash their pure attacking sound in Birmingham on Saturday night — just days after the release of their debut album *Vultures*.

Wolverhampton's Thom Edward (guitars/vocals) and Ash Weaver (drums) describe themselves as 'rock music for degenerates' with bludgeoning riffs and furiously propulsive percussion.

The band began life in the Black Country as a three-piece, until bassist and founder Dave Copson dropped out due to health reasons. But the duo already have plans to expand into a three-piece again and maybe even beyond that.

They will be in concert on Saturday at the Sunflower Lounge on Smallbrook Queensway, celebrating the release of their fearsome debut on One Little Indian, Björk's label, this week.

The title track — described as 'ferocious' — will be released as a single on May 25.

God Damn's influences include Nirvana, The Pixies and At The Drive In, whilst they swear allegiance to the 'Seven J's' — Hendrix, Homme, Cash, White, Page, Bonham and Jesse 'The Devil' Hughes, of Eagles of Death Metal.

Their set up has naturally drawn comparisons with Royal Blood and Slaves. They have played shows with the latter, as well as Funeral For A Friend, The Wytches, Eagulls and Turbowolf, among others.



Wolverhampton hard rock duo God Damn, Thom (right) and Ash

"We're a noisy band — we're probably the noisiest band in Britain right now but you can't have heaviness without the lighter touch. Dynamics are important," says Thom.

They described their album *Vultures* as "everything we hoped for and so much more".

"Broadly speaking, the album explores lyrical themes such as egotism, anti-capitalism, loss," says Thom. "It's important to write each new song different from the last."

"Angry and abrasive is good but you can't do that all the time or you'll go mad."



'A big fan of the great lady's since a tiny tot'

Singer gets Doris's vote

FORMER Wolverhampton student Clare Teal and her Hollywood Orchestra celebrate Doris Day with a tribute to the living legend at Birmingham Town Hall on Saturday.

Yorkshire jazz singer Clare will be revisiting Doris's professional life, from her early days with Les Brown and his Band of Renown to her massive hit songs when Queen of Hollywood and her pop success in the 1960s.

Songs include *Secret Love*, *Move Over Darling*, *Deadwood Stage* and *Que Sera Sera*. "I've been a big fan of the great lady's from being a tiny tot," says Clare.

Parcel

"I was selling CDs after a gig in Clacton when a smartly dressed woman asked me to sign the CD she had just bought, 'of course, who's it for love?' The answer: Doris Day. I looked up thinking, really — in Clacton? I signed the CD and went on my merry way. Months later I had an email from Annie of Clacton to say Doris had enjoyed my record. A lovely parcel arrived in the post containing a signed CD from Doris herself. This now takes pride of place in the office."

Doris, now 91, lives in retirement in Carmel, California, dedicating much of her energy to animal welfare projects.

Clare became a familiar voice on radio as presenter of BBC Radio 2's *Big Band Special*. The Skipton lass discovered jazz via her grandmother's record collection and studied music at Wolverhampton Polytechnic (now university) before entering show business singing jingles. She has been associated with *Big Band Special* for 11 years. See www.thsh.co.uk or call 0121 780 3333 for tickets.

Ghost melodies unchained again

WEST Bromwich Operatic Society are staging a much-loved movie turned musical this week at Wolverhampton's Grand.

WBOS opened with *Ghost The Musical* last night (Wednesday), based on the Patrick Swayze and Demi Moore movie, and it continues to Saturday. There are 7.30pm performances plus a 2.30pm matinee on Saturday.

The show includes classic scenes from the film about a loving couple not be separated by death thanks to a dodgy psychic.

A spokesperson said: "Our aim as an amateur company has been to continue performing in professional theatres and to keep the standard of productions as high as possible."

Classic courtroom drama at the Grand

AMERICAN courtroom drama *Twelve Angry Men* stars popular TV actor Jason Merrells as the righteous Juror 8 at Wolverhampton Grand Theatre from Monday to Saturday.

Reginald Rose's play became a movie classic with Henry Fonda in 1957. The revival was a hit at Birmingham Rep with Martin Shaw returning to his home city to play Juror 8. It has since been a West End success with Shaw and Tom Conti.

Jason Merrells, a star of *Casualty* and *Waterloo Road* before becoming *Emmerdale* villain Declan Macey, plays the one juror pitted against 11 with a life at stake.

Totally wired for alt-rock veterans

ALTERNATIVE rock veterans The Fall, the late great John Peel's favourite band, are in concert tonight (Thursday) at Birmingham venue The Institute. The band fronted by Mark E Smith released their 31st album, *Sub-Lingual Tablet*, on Cherry Red Records on Monday.

Founder Smith is the one constant since the band started in Manchester in 1976. The Fall is known for his distinctive vocals, cryptic lyrics and unique sound.

Other gigs include a sell-out by Slaves at The Institute, Digbeth, on Monday and Jesse Malin at O2 Academy 3 on Tuesday with new album *New York Before The War*.

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Unspoiled beaches, such as this one at Porto Katsiki, is one of the main attractions



Enjoying eating out at a restaurant near Kalamitsi



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Stunning views are guaranteed

Lefkas – this is the relaxing, unspoilt holiday area that you dream about

ASIDE from the hum of cicadas, punctuated by the odd dog barking and cockerel crowing, it's completely silent.

It's the same on the empty roads, where all the signs are in a foreign language, with very few of the customary English translations you so often expect to see in this part of the world.

There are no sprawling resorts and strips of neon nightclubs, just picture-perfect towns occupied by a few tavernas, shops and hotels. It's a far cry from the stereotypical image of a Greek getaway. Lefkas might be the fourth largest Ionian Island, but it's the unspoiled stuff of your dreams.

Our accommodation is the perfect example of the trademark seclusion of Lefkas. From our private poolside terrace, we can sit with a glass of the local wine, enjoying

By Ellen Manning

views of the capital, Lefkas Town, and across the water to the mainland.

With the nearest neighbour a few hundred metres away, and the pool hidden from view, it's the perfect place to relax. But it's not just the peace and quiet that makes Lefkas different from other islands.

Freedom

Just 21 miles long and nine miles wide, Lefkas – which some people also refer to as Lefkada – was a peninsula of Arcanania until it was split by a 28m canal excavated by the Corinthians in 640BC. Now you come and go across a swing-bridge that joins the mainland to the island, enjoying the feeling and culture of being on a Greek island with the freedom to easily explore further afield. Not that there isn't plenty to do on Lefkas.

Divided by the towering Mount Stavratos, each corner of the island has its own character – from the sheltered east coast with family-friendly beaches, to the crashing waves and steep cliffs of the dramatic west coast, with luscious rolling countryside dotted with deserted windmills and watermills in between.

It's here, inland, where you can really soak up the unbelievably slow pace.

Kavalos, the sleepy hamlet where our windmill lies, is the perfect example. From morning to evening, nothing seems to change, except the addition of a few Greek men outside what appears to be a bar.

The island's capital is far from a bustling metropolis. We accidentally arrive during siesta and wander around the narrow streets, thinking we're in one of those films where the whole world has suddenly disappeared. The low-key nature of the island

brings its own low-key tourist attractions.

Near to the windmill, we hunt for the Melissa Gorge, a small gorge opened up by the local authority and given a paved route running past ruined watermills and windmills. After three days of searching we finally find it, directed on a tiny road sign.

On the other side of the island, just outside the tourist resort of Nidri, a picturesque harbour filled with boats clamouring to take people on tours of the nearby tiny islands, are the Rachi waterfalls. Not on Niagara levels, more a slow trickle.

Boating is the start of quite a lot of water-orientated action on Lefkas. The southern resort of Vassiliki is internationally recognised as one of the leading windsurfing resorts in Europe. And then there's the beaches. A tour of the famous west coast takes in some of the most impressive sights such as Kathisma Beach and Porto Katsiki.

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CHOICE



Alexander Armstrong

Pointless Celebrities
BBC1, 6.10pm
Alexander Armstrong and Richard Osman host another star-studded round of the unorthodox general knowledge quiz, this time with a 'British Film' theme. The celebrities aiming to come up with obscure answers this time are Quadrophena stars Phil Daniels and Leslie Ash, Trainspotting and Shallow Grave actor Keith Allen, Gregory's Girl actress Clare Grogan, Mean Machine's Vas Blackwood, This is England's Thomas Turgoose, comedian, impressionist and screenwriter Phil Cornwell and Sally Thomsett, who played the youngest Waterbury sibling, Phyllis, in the 1970 adaptation of The Railway Children.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **10.00** Saturday Kitchen Live. **11.30** Paul Hollywood's Bread. (R) **12.00** BBC News; Weather. **12.10** Football Focus. **12.50** Saturday Sportsday. **1.00** Athletics. **2.00** Live Challenge Cup Rugby League. Leeds Rhinos v Huddersfield Giants (Kick-off 2.30pm). **4.30** Final Score. Jason Mohammad presents a round-up of the classified results. **5.20** Celebrity Mastermind. With Mark Thompson, Cheryl Baker, Guy Henry and Timothy Bentnick. (R) **5.50** BBC News. **6.00** Regional Programme. **6.10** **Pointless Celebrities.** Alexander Armstrong and Richard Osman challenge actors from classic British films, including Phil Daniels, Leslie Ash and Thomas Turgoose, to take part in the unorthodox quiz show. **7.00** **Atlantis.** Double bill. Jason is determined to rescue his fellow prisoners from the amphitheatre, and makes a daring return to Atlantis, which is becoming an ever more dangerous realm under Pasiphae's villainous rule. The hero and his friends face treachery at every turn, and come to realise that the only hope for the future is to kill the queen. Jack Donnelly stars. Last in the series. **8.30** **The National Lottery: In It to Win It.** New series. Dale Winton returns with the big-cash quiz show. Includes the Lotto and Thunderball draws with Kate Garraway, and a performance by Ella Eyre. **9.20** **Casualty.** Charlie goes to Bucharest with Connie to find his missing son, whom he discovers is addicted to heroin and will go to desperate lengths to pay his debts to some shady characters. **10.10** BBC News; Weather. **10.30** **Match of the Day.** Gary Lineker presents highlights of the latest Premier League clashes, including Queens Park Rangers v Newcastle United and Sunderland v Leicester City; National Lottery Update. **11.55** **Live at the Apollo.** Hal Crutenden hosts an evening of stand-up at the Apollo in Hammersmith, London, introducing routines by Justin Moorhouse and Tom Stadel. (R) **12.25** **Film: The 51st State.** (2001) Action comedy, with Samuel L Jackson and Robert Carlyle. **1.50** Weather for the Week Ahead. **1.55** BBC News.

BBC2

6.20 Animal Park. (R) **6.50** Film: In Search of the Castaways. (1962) **8.30** Film: The Charge of the Light Brigade. (1968) **10.20** Homes Under the Hammer. (R) **11.20** Escape to the Country. (R) **12.05** Living Famously. (R) **1.05** Film: Rope. (1948) Hitchcock thriller, with Farley Granger and John Dall. **2.25** James Mason: Talking Pictures. (R) **3.05** Film: North By Northwest. (1959) Hitchcock thriller, starring Cary Grant. **5.20** Flog It! (R) **6.20** **Gardeners' World.** (R) **6.50** **Modern Times: The Great British Garden Watch.** Documentary about a new breed of amateur naturalists who go to extreme lengths to capture the secret lives of the animals in their gardens. (R) **7.50** **Britain's Greatest Generation.** The united spirit of the Second World War, which saw women adopt roles previously filled by men, and rescue workers and volunteers risk all to save those injured in the Blitz. (R) **8.50** **Dad's Army.** With the Walmington-on-Sea Home Guard now established, Captain Mainwaring sets about trying to get equipment for the platoon. (R) **9.20** Film: **Alan Partridge: Alpha Papa.** (2013) Premiere. The hapless local radio DJ ends up in the centre of a crisis when a colleague gets fired by the station's new owners, only to respond by returning to the studio with a shotgun and taking hostages. The police enlist Alan's aid as a negotiator, giving him the chance to revive his own flagging public profile. Comedy, starring Steve Coogan, Colm Meaney and Sean Pertwee. **10.45** **Rory Bremner's Election Report.** The impressionist is joined by John Bird, Matt Forde and Sara Pascoe to reflect on the events of the general election and look forward to what lies ahead. (R) **11.15** **W1A.** David Wilkes seeks help in fleshing out the concept for new show One Big Family, and new Head of Inclusivity Lucy Freeman tries to 'viralize' Muslim BBC Weather. Last in the series. (R) **11.45** Film: **In the Loop.** (2009) A witless government minister gets out of his depth in international politics after suggesting a war is imminent. Satirical comedy, starring Peter Capaldi. **1.30** This is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITY: Fort Boyard Ultimate Challenge. **6.25** Pat & Stan. (R) **6.35** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **6.45** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **7.00** Canimals. (R) **7.15** Sooty. (R) **7.30** Super 4. (R) **7.45** Nerds & Monsters. (R) **8.00** Thunderbirds Are Go. **8.25** ITV News. **8.30** Weekend. **9.25** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) **10.25** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) **11.25** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) **12.30** ITV News; Weather. **12.35** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R) **1.40** Doc Martin. (R) **2.40** Who's Doing the Dishes? (R) **3.40** Film: **Freaky Friday.** (2003) Disney comedy remake, starring Jamie Lee Curtis and Lindsay Lohan. **5.35** Regional Programme; Weather. **5.45** ITV News; Weather. **6.00** **New You've Been Framed! Hall of Framed.** Harry Hill narrates a comical selection of some of the funniest clips featured on the show to celebrate the series' 25th anniversary. Featuring everything from giddy grandmas, cute kids and crazy animals to below-the-belt mishaps, practical jokes and painful-looking accidents. **7.00** **Ninja Warrior UK.** Ben Shephard, Rochelle Humes and Chris Kamara host the semi-final of the nationwide endurance contest, giving past winners a chance to return to the obstacle course for a chance to once again tackle the heights of Mount Midoriyama – and claim the title of Ninja Warrior UK. **8.00** **Britain's Got Talent.** Simon Cowell, David Walliams, Amanda Holden and Alesha Dixon preside over proceedings as the hunt for Britain's next star entertainer reaches the sixth round of auditions. Ant and Dec are on hand to introduce the acts, and to congratulate or commiserate with them once the judges have passed their verdict. **9.20** **Play to the Whistle.** Guests AP McCoy, Jonny Ross and Brooke Vincent join Holly Willoughby and her regular panellists for another edition of the sports-based comedy panel show. **10.05** ITV News; Weather. **10.20** Film: **The Break-Up.** (2006) A couple's relationship comes to an end, but neither wants to give up their home, forcing them to carry on living together. Comedy drama, starring Jennifer Aniston. **12.15** Jackpot247. **3.00** The Jeremy Kyle Show USA. (R) **3.40** ITV Nightscreen.

CHANNEL 4

6.15 How I Met Your Mother. (R) **6.40** How I Met Your Mother. (R) **7.05** Tarawera Ultra Marathon. **7.30** FIM Superbike World Championship. **8.00** The Morning Line. **9.00** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **9.30** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **10.00** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **10.30** Frasier. (R) **11.00** Frasier. (R) **11.30** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **12.00** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **12.25** Marvel's Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D. (R) **1.25** Channel 4 Racing. Live coverage from Newbury and Newmarket. **4.15** Come Dine with Me. (R) **4.45** Come Dine with Me. (R) **5.15** Come Dine with Me. (R) **5.45** Come Dine with Me. (R) **6.15** Come Dine with Me. The final dinner party from Northampton. (R) **6.40** Channel 4 News. **7.00** **Cornwall: Walking Through History.** Tony Robinson takes a four-day trek along the coastline between Plymouth in Devon and Falmouth, learning about the thriving smuggling trade in Cornwall during the late 18th century. The area's tiny secretive harbours, beaches and secluded coves were ideal for illicit imports such as tobacco and brandy, and the business was so huge it threatened the national economy. Last in the series. (R) **8.00** **The World's Most Extreme.** An exploration of the most unusual airports on the planet, including a runway squeezed between skyscrapers and a landing strip carved into mountains. **9.00** Film: **The Hunger Games.** (2012) A totalitarian future-America holds an annual nationally televised event in which two children from each of its regions fight to the death until only one remains. A teenage girl takes her younger sister's place in the games and must pit her wits against the deadly combat skills of her rivals. Sci-fi adventure, starring Jennifer Lawrence. **11.50** Film: **Underworld: Awakening.** (2012) Vampire Selene awakes from cryonic suspension to battle mutant werewolves and a human plot to annihilate the undead. Action fantasy, with Kate Beckinsale and India Eisley. **1.30** Alan Carr: Chatty Man. (R) **2.25** Hollyoaks. (R) **4.35** Double Your House for Half the Money. (R) **5.30** The Common Denominator. (R) **5.55** How I Met Your Mother. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake! **10.00** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. (R) **10.35** Cowboy Builders & Bodge Jobs. (R) **11.30** Britain's Horror Homes. (R) **12.30** The Nightmare Neighbour Next Door. (R) **1.25** The Hotel Inspector. (R) **2.25** Film: Columbo: The Most Dangerous Match. (1973) Detective drama, with Peter Falk and Laurence Harvey. **3.55** Cats Make You Laugh Out Loud 2. (R) **4.55** Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away. (R) **5.50** 5 News Weekend. **5.55** Police Interceptors. (R) **6.45** Film: **Spider-Man 3.** (2007) A sinister alien parasite brings out the web-slinging hero's darker side, filling him with thoughts of revenge on his uncle's murderer, the shape-shifting Sandman. Meanwhile, he also has to contend with the challenge of his best friend following in his father's villainous footsteps – and a jealous rival developing superpowers of his own. Superhero sequel, with Tobey Maguire, Kirsten Dunst and James Franco. Edited to reduce violence, flashing images and end credits. **9.20** **Big Brother: Timebomb.** Daily round-up of highlights, revealing how the housemates are getting on under the all-seeing eye of Big Brother, featuring the latest tasks, games, arguments, laughs, diary room visits and bedroom chit-chat. Narrated by Marcus Bentley. **10.20** **CSI: Crime Scene Investigation.** A teenager is found dead in a public toilet, and an image on his phone leads the team to the daughters of a crime lab director, who both seem to have been abducted by the killer. **11.15** **NCIS.** The murder of a marine's wife is shown live on the internet and inquiries point to two housewives who were viewing their own pornographic website, but have since vanished. (R) **12.15** SuperCasino. Viewers get the chance to take part in live interactive gaming, taking a mix of roulette-wheel spins and lively chat from the presenting team. **3.10** Big Brother: Timebomb. Daily round-up of highlights, featuring the latest tasks, games, arguments, laughs, diary room visits and bedroom chit-chat. (R) **4.00** Cats Make You Laugh Out Loud 2. Presenters Dave Spiky and Zoe Lyons introduce a second compilation of the internet's most popular cat videos. With animal behaviour therapist Professor Peter Neville. (R) **4.50** Make It Big. (R) **5.45** Angels of Jarm. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Three
7.00 Top Gear. **8.00** How to Win Eurovision. **10.00** Happy Valley. **11.00** Family Guy. **1.15** Murder in Successville. **1.45** Nick Helm's Heavy Entertainment. **2.15** Bluestone 42. **3.45** Great Movie Mistakes V: Revenge of the Fifth. **4.00** Close. **BBC Four**
7.00 Survivors: Nature's Indestructible Creatures. **8.00** Wild Arabia. **9.00** 1864. **11.00** Queen: Days of Our Lives. **12.00** Metal at the BBC. **12.30** Guitar Heroes at the BBC. **1.30** Wild Arabia. **2.30** Survivors: Nature's Indestructible Creatures. **3.30** Close. **ITV2**
11.15 Britain's Got Talent. **12.35** Britain's Got More Talent. **1.35** Catchphrase. **2.20** Film: Kindergarten Cop (1990). **4.30** Mr Bean. **5.40** Film: King Kong (2005). **9.20** Britain's Got More Talent. **10.20** Celebrity Juice. **11.05** Britain's Got Talent. **12.20** Britain's Got More Talent. **1.20** Hell's Kitchen. **2.55** Teleshopping. **5.55** ITV2 Nightscreen. **ITV3**
12.30 Film: Evil Under the Sun (1982). **2.50** Wycliffe. **3.55** Film: Columbo: Etude in Black (1972). **6.00** Lewis. **8.00** Doc Martin. **9.00** Foyle's War. **11.00** Inspector Morse. **1.20** Wire in the Blood. **2.15** ITV3 Nightscreen. **2.30** Teleshopping. **ITV4**
11.45 Pawn Stars. **1.05** Gunsmoke. **2.15** Film: The Cimarron Kid (1952). **4.00** British Touring Car Championship Highlights. **5.30** Pulp Stars. **6.00** Storage Wars: New York. **7.00** Shred and Buried. **8.00** Film: Thunderball (1965). **10.45** Film: On Deadly Ground (1994). **12.50** Film: Bowfinger (1999). **2.25** Tommy Cooper. **2.50** ITV4 Nightscreen. **3.00** Teleshopping. **E4**
11.00 Baby Daddy. **12.00** New Girl. **1.00** The Goldbergs. **2.00** How I Met Your Mother. **2.55** Film: Maid in Manhattan (2002). **5.00** Made in Chelsea. **6.00** The Big Bang Theory. **9.00** Film: She's All That (1999). **11.00** Soggy Starb. **12.00** The Inbetweeners. **1.10** Rule Tube: Mash'd 'n' Mixed. **2.15** 2 Broke Girls. **2.40** How I Met Your Mother. **3.25** Rules of Engagement. **3.50** New Girl. **4.40** Make It or Break It. **Film4**
11.00 Appointment in London (1952). **1.00** Rio (2011). **2.50** Flash Gordon (1980). **5.00** City of Ember (2008). **6.50** Definitely, Maybe (2008). **9.00** The A-Team (2010). **11.20** The Raid (2011). **1.20** Mirrors (2008). **3.35** Close.

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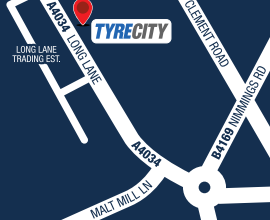
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CHOICE



Jonathan Strange & Mr Norrell
BBC1, 9pm
New series. At the beginning of the 19th century, the world no longer believes in magic - until the reclusive Mr Norrell stuns the people of York by making statues surrounding the city's cathedral speak and move. Meanwhile, the rich and charming Jonathan Strange, more interested in wine and women than reading dusty old books, discovers that he too has magical powers. As the duo's stories intertwine, they embark on a fantastic journey involving mystical creatures, the reanimation of the dead and war with Napoleon's French Empire. Fantasy based on Susanna Clarke's novel, starring Marc Warren.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **7.30** Match of the Day. (R) **9.00** The Andrew Marr Show. **10.00** The Big Questions. **11.00** Sunday Politics. **12.15** MOTD2 Extra. With Mark Chapman and the Match of the Day team. **1.00** BBC News. Weather. **1.15** Bargain Hunt. (R) **1.55** Homes Under the Hammer. (R) **2.55** Escape to the Country. (R) **3.25** Shark. (R) **4.25** Lifestile. **4.35** Points of View. **4.50** Songs of Praise - School Choir of the Year. **5.35** RHS Chelsea Flower Show 2015. **6.35** BBC News. **6.50** Regional Programme. **7.00** **Countryfile**. Anita Rani returns to her home town of Bradford to explore the rural gems on her own doorstep and the journey that has been made for centuries from the urban sprawl to the fresh air of the nearby moors. She also presents archive items featuring stories where town meets country, including Matt Baker taking to the dizzying heights of the Avon Gorge in Bristol. Including Weather for the Week Ahead. **8.00** **Antiques Roadshow**. Fiona Bruce and the team visit Barrington Court in Somerset, where discoveries include a toy Noah's Ark from the 1920s, an Elizabethan wine jug found at a car-boot sale and a £12 charity shop bracelet that dates back to the Victorian era. Among the other finds are a 16th-century silver cup constructed around a carved coconut, a vial of smelling salts with a mystery compartment and a collection of ceramic brewery figures that have seen better days. **9.00** **Jonathan Strange & Mr Norrell**. New series. The lives of two magicians become intertwined with the fate of 19th-century England. Fantasy based on Susanna Clarke's novel, starring Eddie Marsan and Bertie Carvel. **10.00** BBC News. **10.20** Regional Programme. **10.30** Match of the Day 2. Mark Chapman reviews the latest Premier League action, featuring Swansea City v Manchester City and Manchester United v Arsenal. **11.35** **Athletics**. The Shanghai Golden Grand Prix. Action from the second Diamond League event of the season, held at the Shanghai Stadium in China. **12.35** Weather for the Week Ahead. **12.40** BBC News.

BBC2

6.00 Homes Under the Hammer. **6.30** The Big Allotment Challenge. (R) **7.30** Countryfile. (R) **8.30** Gardeners' World. (R) **9.00** The Beechgrove Garden. **9.30** Saturday Kitchen Best Bites. **11.00** Mary Berry's Absolute Favourites. (R) **11.30** Paul Hollywood's Bread. (R) **12.00** Film: Scott of the Antarctic. (1948) Fact-based drama, starring John Mills. **1.45** Live Challenge Cup Rugby League. Wakefield Trinity Wildcats v Leigh Centurions (Kick-off 2.15pm). **4.30** Trialblazer. **6.00** **Hotel India**. The Taj Mahal Palace in Mumbai is one of India's oldest and most famous hotels and is where the super-rich go to be treated like the maharajahs of the country's past. This documentary was filmed over the course of six months and goes behind the scenes with the 1,500-strong staff as they respond to every whim and demand of the guests. In the first episode, general manager Gaurav and executive housekeeper Indrani spend days making countless checks ahead of VIP visits to the luxurious Tata suite, while oil trader Captain Bhasin hosts a cocktail party in his rooms. (R) **7.00** **A Very British Airline**. Documentary about the inner workings of British Airways, exploring how the airline tries to persuade people to spend more by flying first class. (R) **8.00** **Demolition: The Wrecking Crew**. New series. Following crews bringing down some of the country's biggest buildings, including the demolition of the 100m cooling towers of Didoct A power station. **9.00** **The Detectives**. New series. The work of a police team focusing on sex offences, beginning with a historic abuse investigation into a DJ accused of a string of sex offences in the 1960s and 1970s. Continues tomorrow. **10.00** Film: **Made in Dagenham**. (2010) The female employees of a 1960s British car firm lead a national strike, demanding the right to equal pay. Fact-based comedy drama, starring Sally Hawkins. **11.45** Film: **Hideous Kinky**. (1998) A single mother decides to uproot her two children and head for Morocco in the hope of finding spiritual fulfillment. 1970s-set drama, starring Kate Winslet. **1.20** Sign Zone: Countryfile. (R) **2.20** Holby City. (R) **3.20** This is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITY: Fort Boyard Ultimate Challenge. **8.25** Pat & Stan. (R) **6.35** Dino Dan: Treks Adventures. (R) **7.00** Canimals. (R) **7.15** Sooty. (R) **7.30** Fort Boyard Ultimate Challenge. (R) **8.25** ITV News. **8.30** Weekend. **9.25** Judge Rinder. (R) **10.20** Judge Rinder. (R) **11.25** Judge Rinder. (R) **12.25** ITV News: Weather. **12.30** Tipping Point. (R) **1.30** Britain's Got Talent. (R) **2.45** All Star Family Fortunes. (R) **3.50** Midsomer Murders. (R) **5.50** Ninja Warrior UK. (R) **6.45** **Regional Programme**: Weather. **7.00** ITV News: Weather. **7.15** **Celebrity Squares**. Sarah Milligan, Ana Matronic, Joe Lycett, Tess Daly, Rickie Haywood-Williams, Melvin Odom and Milton Jones join Tim Vine and Joe Wilkinson in the grid. Warwick Davis hosts. **8.00** **Sunday Night at the Palladium**. Jimmy Carr hosts the variety show, with music by Markus Feehily, Rebecca Ferguson and Deacon Blue, a dance routine from Vincent and Flavia, and comedy from Rob Beckett. **9.00** **Home Fires**. The impact of the war begins to be felt in Great Paford as the women are forced to make sacrifices for the salvage effort. But soon matters on the personal front replace their efforts on the home front as Kate and Jack's relationship intensifies. Pat's marriage deteriorates and Claire finally plucks up the courage to ask Spencer out - unaware he is hiding a secret that could ruin their relationship before it has even started. Meanwhile, Alison resorts to desperate measures to pay a bill, and soon realises her actions will cost her much more. Wartime drama, with Claire Rushbrook, Daisy Badger, Rachel Hurd-Wood and Fenella Woolgar. **10.05** ITV News: Weather. **10.15** **Perspectives: The Great American Love Song with Nicky Campbell**. The broadcaster reveals his passion for the music of 1920s and 1930s New York, choosing six timeless love songs from the era and finding out about the artists who wrote them. **11.15** **Premiership Rugby Union**. Action from the 22nd and final round of fixtures. **12.10** The Store. **2.30** Motorsport UK. **3.20** The Jeremy Kyle Show USA. (R) **4.00** ITV Nightscreen. **5.05** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R)

CHANNEL 4

6.20 How I Met Your Mother. (R) **6.40** How I Met Your Mother. (R) **7.05** Volkswagen Racing Cup. **7.35** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.00** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.30** Frasier. (R) **9.00** Frasier. (R) **9.30** Sunday Brunch. **12.30** George Clarke's Amazing Spaces. (R) **1.30** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **2.00** The Simpsons. (R) **2.30** The Simpsons. (R) **3.00** Film: The Parent Trap. (1998) Comedy remake, starring Lindsay Lohan. **5.35** A Place in the Sun: Home or Away. **6.30** **Channel 4 News**. **7.00** **Speed with Guy Martin**. The motorcycle racer and lorry mechanic attempts, with the aid of slipstreaming, to break the British record for outright speed on a bicycle - 110mph. Guy recruits a team comprising a truck racer, a bike builder and a design engineer to prepare for the feat, and undergoes a training regime with double Olympic cycling gold medalist Laura Trott before heading to Pendine Sands on the shores of Carmarthen Bay for his challenge. (R) **8.00** **For the Love of Cars**. The lads celebrate Swedish cars, which they claim to be the unlikely trailblazers of motoring. Philip Glenister gets to live out a childhood dream when he gets behind the wheel of the Volvo P1800 from Roger Moore's 1960s TV series The Saint, and they visit the renowned Millbrook test track to put a 25-year-old Saab 900 Turbo through its paces. **9.00** **Grayson Perry's Dream House**. Documentary following the creation of Grayson Perry's biggest and most ambitious work of art to date - the building of a secular chapel in tribute to Essex women. **10.00** **8 Out of 10 Cats Does Countdown**. Jimmy Carr hosts the comedy panel show's version of the famous quiz, with team captains Sean Lock and Jon Richardson joined by guests Kathy Burke and Kevin Bridges. (R) **11.05** **Jimmy Carr: Laughing & Joking**. (R) **12.10** Film: Hyde Park on Hudson. (2012) **1.45** Undercover Boss Canada. (R) **2.35** Born Naught? (R) **3.30** Phil: Secret Agent Down Under. (R) **4.25** The Renovation Game. (R) **5.20** Hugh's 3 Good Things: Best Bites. (R) **5.30** The Common Denominator. (R) **5.55** How I Met Your Mother. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake!: Peppa Pig. **6.05** Bananas in Pyjamas. (R) **6.20** Angelina Ballerina. (R) **6.30** Pip Ahoy! (R) **6.45** The Mr Men Show. (R) **6.55** Chloe's Closet. (R) **7.05** Roodbar and Custard Too. (R) **7.15** Make Way for Noddy. (R) **7.25** Paw Patrol. (R) **7.40** Little Princess. (R) **7.50** Milkshake! Monkey. (R) **7.55** Wanda and the Alien. (R) **8.05** Milkshake! Pop Box. (R) **8.10** Zack and Quack. (R) **8.25** Oily the Little White Van. (R) **8.30** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **8.40** Mio Mao. (R) **8.45** Jelly Jam. (R) **9.00** LazyTown. (R) **9.30** Dora and Friends. (R) **10.00** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. (R) **10.35** Access. **10.40** The Dog Rescuers. (R) **11.05** Police Interceptors. (R) **12.05** Police Interceptors. (R) **1.05** Police Interceptors. (R) **2.00** Film: The Money Pit. (1986) Comedy, starring Tom Hanks and Shelley Long. **3.45** Film: See No Evil, Hear No Evil. (1989) A blind man and his deaf friend go on the run to escape a trumped-up murder charge and crooks tracking down a top-secret microchip. Comedy, starring Richard Pryor and Gene Wilder. Edited to reduce language, nudity, innuendo and violence. **4.50** Film: The Great Escape. (1963) Allied prisoners held in a supposedly escape-proof detention camp plan an ingenious mass breakout. Second World War drama, with Steve McQueen, James Coburn and Richard Attenborough. **8.50** **5 News Weekend**. **9.00** **Big Brother: Timebomb**. Daily round-up of highlights, revealing how the housemates are getting on under the all-seeing eye of Big Brother, featuring the latest tasks, games, arguments, laughs, diary room visits and bedroom chit-chat. Narrated by Marcus Bentley. **10.00** Film: **The Rock**. (1996) An FBI chemical weapons expert and a jailed SAS veteran must break into Alcatraz to bring down a renegade general and his men. Action thriller, with Sean Connery. **12.40** Film: Bangkok Dangerous. (2008) A hitman in Thailand questions his way of life, while his employer plots to have him killed when his work is done. Action thriller remake, with Nicolas Cage. **2.30** SuperCasing. Viewers get the chance to take part in live interactive gaming, with a mix of roulette-wheel spins and lively chat from the presenting team. **4.00** House Doctor. Ann Maurice and Alistair Appleton present more highlights from the series, recalling a basement flat in north London desperately in need of tidying up. Last in the series. (R) **4.25** Make It Big. (R) **5.45** Angels of Jarm. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Three
7.00 Top Gear **8.00** Don't Tell the Bride **9.00** Russell Howard's Good News **10.00** Tatau **11.25** Family Guy **12.10** Murder in Successville **12.40** American Dad! **1.00** Family Guy **1.25** Nick Helm's Heavy Entertainment **1.50** Russell Howard's Good News **2.20** In Deep **2.35** Tatau
BBC Four
7.00 Operation Jericho **8.00** Fighting for King and Empire: Britain's Caribbean Heroes **9.00** Burma, My Father and the Forgotten Army **10.00** Easter Island: Mysteries of a Lost World **11.30** Je t'aime: The Story of French Song with Petula Clark **12.30** Shirley Bassey at the BBC **1.30** Imagine: Dame Shirley Bassey: The Girl from Tiger Bay **2.30** Operation Jericho **3.30** Close
ITV2
3.30 Film: Legally Blonde 2: Red, White and Blonde (2003) **5.35** Britain's Got Talent **6.55** Britain's Got More Talent **8.00** You've Been Framed! Presents **9.00** Film: 21 Jump Street (2012) **11.15** Film: The Matrix Reloaded (2003) **1.45** Fake Reaction **2.20** Teleshopping **5.50** ITV2 Nightscreen
ITV3
1.25 A Touch of Frost **3.40** Film: Clockwise (1986) **5.35** Wycliffe **6.40** Inspector Morse **9.00** The Best of the Royal Variety **10.00** Vicious **11.05** Film: Steptoe and Son (1972) **1.05** Like Father, Like Son **2.20** Judge Judy **3.20** ITV3 Nightscreen **3.40** Emmerdale
ITV4
12.35 Pawn Stars **2.55** Gunsmoke **4.00** Film: Shalako (1968) **6.15** Film: The Cimarron Kid (1952) **8.00** Premiership Rugby Union **9.00** Film: National Lampoon's Loaded Weapon 1 (1993) **10.45** Film: The Jerk (1979) **12.40** Hell on Wheels **2.15** Tommy Cooper **2.40** Movies Now **2.50** ITV4 Nightscreen
E4
12.30 Made in Chelsea **1.35** Melissa & Joey **2.30** How I Met Your Mother **3.30** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **4.00** The Goldbergs **5.00** Film: Three Men and a Cradle (1987) **7.00** The Big Bang Theory **10.00** Gogglebox **11.00** The Inbetweeners **12.10** Virtually Famous **1.00** Channel 4's Comedy Gala 2014 **2.10** New Girl **2.55** Rules of Engagement **3.15** The Cleveland Show **3.40** Hollyoaks
Film4
11.00 Sea Devils (1953) **1.00** The Legend of Zorro (2005) **3.00** The Hunt for Red October (1990) **6.30** Hugo (2011) **9.00** Braveheart (1995) **12.25** Under Siege 2: Dark Territory (1995) **2.25** The Day He Arrives (2011) **4.00** Close

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FILM CHOICES

MONDAY
The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas, BBC2, 11.20pm
Bruno, a boy in Nazi Germany, moves to the country when his father is placed in charge of a concentration camp. While exploring the woods close to the facility's boundary, he spots a Jewish youngster being held there, and the two become friends – but Bruno remains innocently oblivious to the camp's true purpose. Drama, starring David Thewlis. (2008)

TUESDAY
The Resident, BBC1, 11.45pm
A doctor moves into a spacious new apartment, and becomes attracted to her landlord. However, she does not realise he is becoming dangerously obsessed with her, constructing elaborate hiding places to spy on her. His behaviour becomes increasingly sinister, and her reconciliation with her ex-boyfriend drives him into a murderous rage. Horror, with Hilary Swank. (2011)



The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas, Monday, BBC2, 11.20pm

WEDNESDAY
Robot & Frank, BBC1, 11.15pm
An elderly jewel thief struggles to look after himself as his memory starts to fail him. His busy son invests in a robot carer to look after the old man, but the retired crook sees the machine as the perfect partner for one last heist. Sci-fi comedy drama, starring Frank Langella and James Marsden. (2012)

THURSDAY
The Other Man, BBC1, 11.45pm
After his wife's death, a man learns she was having an affair when he discovers provocative photos of her with another man. He resolves to track down her lover and exact his revenge, but when he confronts the man about his misdeeds, he instead strikes up an unlikely friendship, making him question whether he should continue with his vengeful scheme. Drama, starring Liam Neeson and Antonio Banderas. (2008)

FRIDAY
Fletch, ITV, 10.40pm
A wisecracking reporter and master of disguise investigates a man who falsely claims to be dying and is asking people to kill him. Comedy mystery based on Gregory Mcdonald's novel, with Chevy Chase and Tim Matheson. (1985)

The stars are out to shine on a night of celebration

Life is rarely quiet in Walford, Westhertfield, Emmerdale, Hollyoaks, or the Doctors' town of Letherbridge, but 2015 has been even more dramatic than usual.

So after 12 months of crying their mascara all down their faces, emerging dazed from realistic-looking wreckage and praying they don't forget their lines ahead of a big live episode, it's time for the soap stars to put on their glad rags and celebrate at The British Soap Awards 2015.

As Phillip Schofield, who is hosting the awards from the Palace Theatre in Manchester, says: "What a year it's been in soap land – we've had some brilliant storylines and acting that's absolutely kept the nation gripped."

"It's my 10th anniversary as host of The British Soap Awards this year so I'm really looking forward to an incredible night that's sure to be one to remember."

Last year's awards were largely dominated by Coronation Street and the heartbreaking demise of Hayley Cropper. Julie Hesmondhalgh and her on-screen husband David Nelson won

Best Actress and Actor respectively (with an additional Dramatic Performance award for Neilson), as well as Best Storyline, Episode and On-Screen Partnership, although the coveted Best British Soap award was snatched by Hollyoaks.

This year though, many seasoned soapwatchers will probably be expecting Coronation Street to take a backseat to its arch-rival EastEnders.

In February, the BBC's flagship soap celebrated its 30th anniversary with a live week, culminating in the revelation that Lucy Beale had been murdered by her little brother. In fact, there was so much going on, some fans barely had the chance to register the news that Kathy Beale, believed to have died off-screen in 2006, was still alive.

Luckily, the awards judges were taking note as her comeback has been nominated for Scene of the Year. There's also a nod for the live episode, while Elliot Carrington, who plays pint-sized killer Bobby Beale, is up for Best Young Performance, and John Altman's 'Nasty' Nick Cotton, who finally breathed his last that week, is up for Best Villain.

However, like the soaps themselves, these awards are usually full of twists and surprises, and there could be some major upsets.

It's also been a spectacular year for Hollyoaks, which brought us a dramatic train crash. Emmerdale gave us the deaths of Katie Sugden and Donna Dingle, while Doctors saw the reunion of Rob and Karen.

Whatever happens, it's going to be an emotional evening, especially as many viewers will be expecting tributes to soap legend Ann Kirkbride, aka Deidre Barlow, who died in January.

But it might also be a time to look ahead to what's in store for the future, and speculate about forthcoming storylines. And given that we recently found out that Kat Moon once gave birth to twins without realising and kindly former vicar's wife Laurel Dingle is now a raging alcoholic, it seems safe to say that no matter how many gongs they pick up, the nation's serials won't be taking it easy during the rest of 2015.

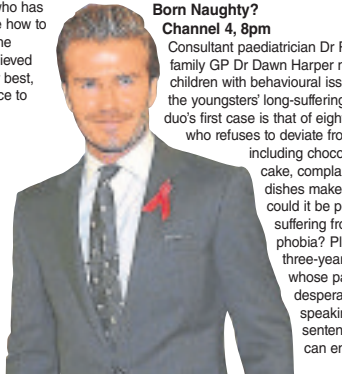


The British Soap Awards 2015, Thursday, ITV, 8pm

BEST OF THE REST

in glamorous outfits – in fact, the trend is so widespread that following last year's one-off documentary, Channel 5 is now bringing us an entire series devoted to it. In this first episode, we meet mum-of-three Lisa Marie Whitcombe, who is entering two of her daughters into a beauty pageant, and Candi Donaldson, who has already taught six-year-old Frankie how to put on make-up and false nails. The mothers also explain why they believed that by making their tots look their best, they are giving them the confidence to face the world.

WEDNESDAY
Inspector George Gently BBC1, 8pm
It's Christmas Eve 1969 and Gently is enjoying a spot of festive cheer until he gets the news that a bank has been hit by armed robbers and he and Bacchus have work to do. The detective's hunt for the gunmen takes him into the world of skinheads and he is later faced with a dilemma. Does the law always have to be so cruel, or



The Class of 92, Monday, ITV, 10.40pm

can he bend it just this once? Detective drama set in the north-east of England, starring Martin Shaw and Lee Ingleby, with a guest appearance by Jody Latham (Shameless). Last in the series.

THURSDAY
Born Naughty? Channel 4, 8pm
Consultant paediatrician Dr Ravi Jayaram and family GP Dr Dawn Harper meet more children with behavioural issues, as well as the youngsters' long-suffering parents. The duo's first case is that of eight-year-old Bobby, who refuses to deviate from a diet including chocolate, chips and cake, complaining that other dishes make him feel unwell – could it be possible he is suffering from a food phobia? Plus, the story of three-year-old Jessi-Jai, whose parents are desperate for her to start speaking in proper sentences so they can engage in conversations together.

FRIDAY
Mysteries of the Bible: Mary Magdalene Channel 5, 8pm
From the writing of the New Testament to the filming of The Da Vinci Code, Mary Magdalene is one of the most controversial figures in the Bible. She features in the Gospels and is present at many of the important moments recorded in Jesus's life, including the crucifixion and the resurrection. However, she also got a reputation as a harlot and fallen woman, mainly dating from a sixteenth-century sermon delivered by Pope Gregory. In this documentary, author Margaret Starbird sets out to investigate claims made in recent years that not only was Mary the wife of Christ, but also the mother of His children. Starbird also examines the role women may have played in the early Christian church.

Mary Berry's Absolute Favourites BBC2, 8pm
The veteran cook focuses on recipes inspired by her love of the countryside. Mushrooms are one of Mary's favourite ingredients and she goes foraging for wild varieties in the New Forest, before cooking garlic mushrooms on toasted brioche and mushroom Scotch eggs – ideal for a country picnic hamper.

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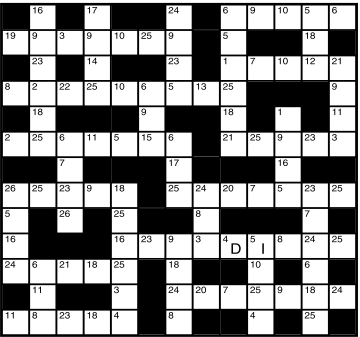
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Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
M	X	W	E	A	T	H	Z	N	L	Y	B	J
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
S	U	Q	F	V	P	G	D	O	R	K	I	C

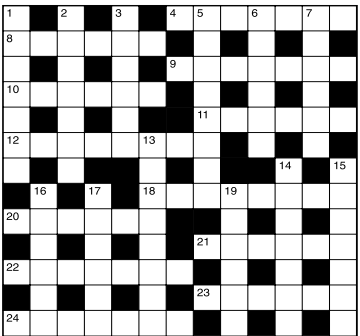
Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.

Cryptic Clues:

Across

4. Teaches one way to confiscate (7)
8. Gloss over (8)
9. I'd note a friend in the best possible way (7)
10. Swedish girl riding around (6)
11. Smile wryly when given the wrong directions (6)
12. Sailors in the drink (8)
18. If done it might be reported (8)
20. First two letters posted away (6)
21. Base Shakespearean character (6)
22. Little of the court's time will be taken by this group of dissipated people (4,3)
23. Be inclined to receive support from others? (4,2)
24. Back the other side (7)
- Down
1. She robbed her sleeping partner of his capital assets (7)
2. Bounty - and it's a big ship too (7)
3. Possibly deigns to draw (6)
5. Sent about ten cents as a deposit (8)
6. Its passengers will be late (6)
7. As yet unalarmed? (6)
13. They secure temporary accommodation (4-4)
14. Friendly? Far from it! (7)
15. Very hard worker supports a mother (7)
16. A variety of bread to cause friction (6)
17. Sting to anger (6)
19. Smoothed out on board perhaps (6)



Quick Clues:

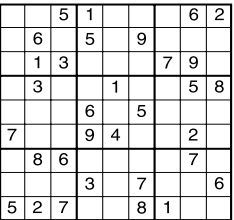
Across

4. Versus (7)
8. Fairness (6)
9. Dry (7)
10. Easy (6)
11. Mar (6)
12. Sit astride (8)
18. Ludicrous (8)
20. Ripe (6)
21. Bewilder (6)
22. Trust (7)
23. Rely (6)
24. Make good (7)

Down

1. Endure (7)
2. Resume (7)
3. Phlegmatic (6)
5. Magnificence (8)
6. Revenue (6)
7. Sleigh (6)
13. Guardian (8)
14. Charged (7)
15. By now (7)
16. In abundance (6)
17. Beat (6)
19. Talented (6)

Sudoku



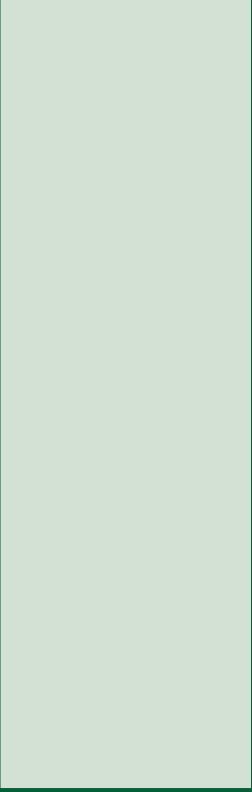
Fill in the grid below so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS >

2	4	3	7	1	6	5	9
7	1	3	6	9	5	8	2
9	6	5	4	8	2	3	7
6	7	4	5	1	8	9	3
3	9	7	7	2	4	5	6
8	5	2	9	6	3	1	4
1	2	7	8	5	6	4	9
4	8	6	2	3	9	7	1
5	3	9	1	4	7	2	8

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS: CRYPTIC - Across: 1 Second-class; 9 Ant; 10 Lower-case; 11 Paced; 13 Epistle; 14 Minute; 16 Uglier; 18 Deepest; 19 Might; 20 Underhand; 21 Too; 22 Prime number. Down: 2 End; 3 Oiled; 4 Dawned; 5 Larking; 6 Startling; 7 Happy medium; 8 Penetration; 12 Contender; 15 Theorem; 17 Strain; 19 Madam; 21 Toe. QUICK - Across: 1 Opinionated; 9 Met; 10 Spectator; 11 Array; 13 Observe; 14 Superb; 16 Pennon; 18 Detests; 19 Dodge; 20 Rebellion; 21 Gas; 22 Never-ending. Down: 2 Put; 3 Nasty; 4 Oberon; 5 Artist; 6 Enthroned; 7 Ambassadors; 8 Free and easy; 12 Reputable; 15 Resolve; 17 Aspire; 19 Dined; 21 Gun.

Thinking space



Quiz

1. What is the ninth sign of the zodiac?
2. What is a turkey brown?
3. In which country is Casablanca?
4. In which ship did Drake circumnavigate the world in 1577-80?
5. Who wrote the play Hay Fever?
6. In which war was the Battle of Borodino?
7. Who painted The Laughing Cavalier?
8. In which country was Albert Einstein Born?
9. What is the capital of Sicily?
10. What was the pen-name of the Irish writer Brian O'Nolan?

Last week's solutions:

Quiz: 1 Hera; 2 1837; 3 Kenya; 4

Beethoven; 5 Four; 6 Kentucky; 7 Argon; 8

Anthony Trollope; 9 Dr. No; 10 Hamlet.

Niner: RELATIONS

Niner

Each number from 1 to 9 represents a different letter. Solve the clues and insert the letters in the appropriate squares to discover a word which uses all nine letters.

5287334 gives an animal,
5611 gives a bird,
79948 gives a snake.



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Halesowen Office Lettings & Property Management



NEW

HALESOWEN, Longmoor Road£850 pcm+Fees
An immaculate & wonderfully presented 3 bed. Mocklow style semi-detached property featuring 2 reception rooms, fitted kitchen, lovely laid out private rear garden, 2 double bedrooms, 1 extended single bedroom, modern bathroom with shower, garage, driveway parking for 2/3 vehicles, gas central heating & double glazed. Ideally located for Huntingtree and Little Valley Primary School. EPC: TBC



BIRMINGHAM, Orion Building£800 pcm+Fees
A fantastic opportunity to rent a fully furnished apartment in the heart of Birmingham City Centre. This 1 bed modern property overlooking the Mailbox features open plan living with 24 hour concierge service and secure underground parking (permit required), double glazed and electric heating. Viewings highly recommended. EPC: C



NEW

HALESOWEN, Hagley Road£795 pcm+Fees
An unfurnished detached house within close proximity of Halesowen. Briefly comprising of: 3 bedrooms, large lounge, fitted kitchen, bathroom with separate w.c., driveway parking & garage, double glazing, gas central heating (new boiler) EPC: D



NEW

STOURBRIDGE, Trinity Road£750 pcm+Fees
A beautifully fully refurbished detached house in this very popular location in a quiet cul-de-sac position comprising of: brand new kitchen leading to a very spacious lounge overlooking a full width conservatory, 3 spacious bedrooms & a fabulous appointed bathroom with shower, integrated garage, driveway for 2 cars, low maintenance garden. Available now. EPC: TBC



NEW

HALESOWEN, Ashville Drive£750 pcm+Fees
An unfurnished detached house, in a popular area, briefly comprising of: gas central heating, 2 reception rooms, fitted kitchen, downstairs w.c., 3 bedrooms, bathroom with shower, front & rear gardens, garage & driveway parking. Within easy reach of Halesowen College & town centre, available early June. EPC: TBC



NEW

BRIERLEY HILL, Wychbury Road£675 pcm+Fees
Superb modern 3 bedroom semi-detached house comprising of: porch, entrance hall, refitted kitchen, lounge diner, conservatory, 3 bedrooms, house bathroom, tandem garage, driveway & delightful rear garden, this family home is situated in an enviable cul-de-sac position and offers a very long rental opportunity. Available Now. EPC: TBC



NEW

Brierley Hill, Lynval Road £650 pcm+Fees
A beautiful family home approached via a concrete print drive giving access to the main property entrance, the accommodation offered includes a lounge/diner, kitchen, laundry room (converted from the garage), 3 bedrooms, family bathroom. A fantastic landscaped garden, close to Stevens Park. This property offers a very long term rental opportunity. EPC: D



HALESOWEN, Summerfield Avenue£650 pcm+Fees
Ideally located in Hurst Green, close to popular schools, motorway access and commutable to Birmingham. This lovely semi-detached home features 2 large bedrooms and a single bedroom, 2 spacious reception rooms, modern fitted kitchen, family bathroom with shower, front and rear gardens, driveway parking and garage. EPC: D



HALESOWEN, Melbourne Road£650 pcm+Fees
A wonderfully presented end terrace property close to Halesowen Town Centre and Halesowen College. This 3 bedroom property features 2 reception rooms, fitted kitchen with wooden work surfaces, downstairs bathroom with separate shower, double glazing, gas central heating, rear garden, and on road parking. Viewings highly recommended to appreciate property. EPC: D



HALESOWEN, Fatherless Barn Crescent£550 pcm+Fees
An unfurnished 3 bedroom semi detached family home within the catchment area for Colley Lane Primary School and the number 9 bus. Featuring an entrance hall, lounge, dining room, kitchen & utility, 3 good size bedrooms & upstairs walk in shower room. Large rear garden & driveway. Available Now. EPC: C



NEW

HALESOWEN, Princess Crescent£550 pcm+Fees
A very well presented 1st floor apartment available in this popular and convenient location in a corner cul-de-sac position, briefly comprising of a modern kitchen with appliances, good size lounge, 2 good size bedrooms, bathroom with shower, garage & parking for 2 vehicles. Available immediately. EPC: C



NEW

HALESOWEN, Beaumont Road£550 pcm+Fees
Located minutes from Blackheath Town Centre this modern 2 bed semi house features, lounge, fitted kitchen, conservatory, bathroom with shower, driveway parking, rear garden. It also benefits from gas central heating and double glazing. EPC: D



HALESOWEN, Holt Road £550 pcm+Fees
A nicely presented refurbished mid terraced home, close to local shops. Featuring 3 bedrooms, 2 reception rooms, fitted kitchen with oven/hob, downstairs bathroom with shower, double glazing, gas central heating, small rear gardens on road parking. Available Now. EPC: D



HALESOWEN, Hawne Court£525 pcm+Fees
Located in a quiet, desirable neighbourhood this is well kept ground floor apartment situated at the end of a peaceful cul de sac, offering a spacious living room, modern fitted kitchen with built-in appliances, 2 double bedrooms, gas central heating, bathroom with fitted shower, allocated parking space with garage. EPC: D



BRIERLEY HILL, Talbot Street£495 pcm+Fees
Fully refurbished end terraced house close to Brierley Hill town centre. This lovely property has new fitted kitchen with oven/hob, rear lounge, long rear garden, 2 bedrooms, white bathroom with shower, newly fitted central heating with new boiler. Available now. EPC: TBC



BRIERLEY HILL, Little John Street£475 pcm+Fees
Located within walking distance to Brierley Hill and Merry Hill. This unfurnished modern end terrace house features 2 double bedrooms, gas central heating, fitted kitchen, downstairs w.c., spacious living room, bathroom with shower, rear garden, off road parking for 2 cars. EPC: C. LANDLORD REQUIRES 2 MONTHS DEPOSIT AND A FAMILY MEMBER TO BE GUARANTOR



CRADLEY HEATH, King Street£475 pcm+Fees
Located in the heart of Old Hill. Ideally situated for local shops, buses and train links. A 1st floor modern apartment which comprises of 2 bedrooms, master bedroom with en-suite, fitted kitchen, spacious lounge, double glazing, electric heating, bathroom with shower, allocated parking space. EPC: C



KIDDERMINSTER, Bewdley Road£425 pcm+Fees
A ground floor flat close to town centre & hospital comprising of: large living room, large double bedroom, fitted kitchen With oven/hob, bathroom with shower, gas central heating, double glazing, small private garden. Available Now EPC: TBC



HALESOWEN, Belgrave Road£425 pcm+Fees
A large ground floor modern apartment within walking distance to Blackheath Town Centre and local buses. Featuring a spacious lounge, fitted kitchen with oven/hob, 1 double bedroom, newly fitted bathroom suite with shower. Gas central heating, small rear garden with private entrance. Available Now. EPC: TBC



HALESOWEN, Stourbridge Road£400 pcm+Fees
An unfurnished mid terraced family home with modern fitted kitchen, 3 good size bedrooms, family bathroom with shower and on road parking. Ideally located close to shops and for the number 9 bus route. EPC: G



LYE, High Street £375 pcm+Fees
Fully refurbished in the centre of Lye. This spacious 2nd floor apartment features a lovely lounge, 1 double bedroom, bathroom, modern and contemporary kitchen/ diner, electric heating, double glazing, on road parking. Available now. EPC: E

PROPERTY

No upward chain on sale of four-bed semi



A WELL-presented four-bed semi in Dog Kennel Lane, Oldbury, has good family-sized accommodation.

Set back from the road, it is for sale through Robert Oulsnam at £219,950 with no upward chain.

Having off-road parking at the front, it has a porch and inner hallway with under-stairs storage, two reception rooms and dining room with French doors to garden, kitchen, separate WC, bathroom, inner hallway, integral garage, conservatory, four bedrooms and loft. The garden has a decking area. Call 0121 4299986 or visit www.oulsnam.net



Extended five-bedroom cottage in a rural area



EXTENDED five-bedroomed detached residence, Japonica Cottage, Gospel Ash Road, Halfpenny Green, is in a highly sought after area.

It is for sale through The Lee Shaw Partnership at £535,000. With an electric gated entrance to block paved driveway and double garage, it has oil central heating and double glazing. There is a porch, open-plan sitting room with inglenook fireplace and ceiling beams, lounge with an open fireplace and beams, conservatory, lobby, WC, dining room, kitchen with an Aga, breakfast room, utility, lobby, rear hall, store room and play room/office. There is a master bedroom en suite and four further bedrooms, large bathroom and loft room/study.

Contact The Lee Shaw Partnership on (01384) 287622 or visit www.leeshaw.com website.





HALESOWEN | £300,000

- Period Detached Property EPC Rating E
- Lounge Dining Room Fitted Kitchen
- Three Bedrooms Family Bathroom
- Detached Garage Driveway Rear Garden

quinton@your-move.co.uk
0121 421 7766



HALESOWEN | £270,000

- Semi Detached EPC Rating E
- Two Reception Kitchen Shower Room
- Three Bedrooms Family Bathroom W/c
- Drive Rear Garden No Upward Chain

quinton@your-move.co.uk
0121 421 7766



QUINTON | £184,950

- Traditional Semi Detached EPC Rating F
- Two Reception Kitchen Conservatory
- Three Bedrooms and Bathroom W/c
- Side Garage Driveway Rear Garden

quinton@your-move.co.uk
0121 421 7766



OLDBURY | £160,000

- Semi Detached Property EPC Rating D
- Open Plan Lounge Diner Kitchen Utility
- Three Bedrooms Bathroom Separate W/c
- Integral Garage Driveway Rear Garden

quinton@your-move.co.uk
0121 421 7766



QUINTON | £139,950

- Semi Detached EPC Rating D
- Through Lounge/Dining Room Kitchen
- Four Bedrooms Downstairs Bathroom
- Drive To The Front Garden To The Rear

quinton@your-move.co.uk
0121 421 7766



QUINTON | £127,000

- Semi Detached Property EPC Rating D
- Lounge Breakfast Kitchen
- Two Bedrooms Bathroom W/c
- Excellent Condition No Upward Chain

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0121 421 7766



BARTLEY GREEN | £125,000

- Mid Terrace Property EPC Rating C
- Lounge Kitchen/Diner Cloaks W/c
- Three Bedrooms Bathroom W/c
- Block Paved Frontage Rear Garden

quinton@your-move.co.uk
0121 421 7766



ROWLEY REGIS | £120,000

- Semi Detached Property EPC Rating D
- Lounge Kitchen Diner Utility Cloaks Wc
- Three Bedrooms Family Bathroom Wc
- Garage Driveway Rear Garden

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0121 421 7766



OLDBURY | £109,950

- Semi Detached Property EPC Rating E
- Two Reception Areas Kitchen W/c
- Three Bedrooms Shower Room W/c W/c
- Gardens To The Front and Rear

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0121 421 7766



OLDBURY | £70,000

- Retirement Apartment EPC Rating C
- Lounge Breakfast Kitchen
- Two Bedrooms Shower Room W/c
- Non Allocated Secure Parking Area

quinton@your-move.co.uk
0121 421 7766



NOTICE OF OFFER |

Property Address: 8 Foredraft Close, Birmingham, B32 3TR.
We advise that an offer has been made for the above property in the sum of £83,000.00. Any persons wishing to increase on this offer should notify the agents of their best offer prior to exchange of contracts.
Agents Address: 536 Hagley Road West, Oldbury, B68 0BZ
Agents Telephone Number: 0121 421 7766
EPC Rating E

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0121 421 7766



QUINTON | £825

- New Build Semi Detached EPC Rating C
- Two Reception Rooms Kitchen S/Room
- Three Bedrooms Bathroom W/c
- Immediate Availability, Fees Apply

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0121 421 7766



QUINTON | £600

- End Terrace Property EPC Rating D
- Lounge Kitchen D/stairs Bathroom
- Three Bedrooms Drive Rear Garden
- Immediate Availability, Fees Apply

quinton@your-move.co.uk
0121 421 7766



ROWLEY REGIS | £535

- Ground Floor Apartment EPC Rating C
- Open Plan Lounge and Kitchen
- Two Bedrooms Master With En-suite
- Bathroom, Allocated Parking, Fees Apply

quinton@your-move.co.uk
0121 421 7766



ROWLEY REGIS | £535

- Ground Floor Apartment EPC Rating C
- Open Plan Lounge and Kitchen
- Two Bedrooms Master With En-suite
- Bathroom, Allocated Parking, Fees Apply

quinton@your-move.co.uk
0121 421 7766



HALESOWEN | £300

- ROOM Within Semi Detached EPC C
- Double Bedroom Shared Lounge
- Shared Kitchen and Bathroom
- Available Immediately, Fees Apply

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Ample parking at semi with price tag of £135k



THIS well-presented three-bedroom semi-detached house in Rifle Street, Bilston has ample parking.

It is for sale priced £135,000. Decorated in neutral shades and with double glazing and gas central heating it has a through hallway.

There is an open plan lounge/diner, kitchen with part tiled walls and door to the garden, modern bathroom and three bedrooms (two with storage).

At the front is a long block paved driveway with a shed and a garden with lawn, decking and a patio area.

For more information contact the agents on 01902 766388 or visit www.homepoint.org.uk



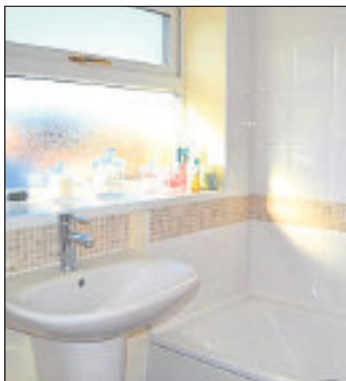
Detached home has potential to expand

A FOUR-BEDROOMED detached property with potential to extend, The Paddock at Coven, Wolverhampton is in an attractive cul-de-sac position.

It is for sale through Skitts Estate Agents at £370,000.

With gas central heating and double glazing it has driveway parking for several vehicles, entrance hall, WC off, lounge with feature fireplace, kitchen with attractive cream units and slate flooring, dishwasher, floor tiling, dining room, utility room/office, bedroom one (en suite and dressing area), bedroom two (en suite), two further bedrooms, a bathroom, garden and garage.

For further information contact Skitts Estate Agents on 01902 788188 or visit www.skitts.net



humberstones homes

0121 422 1188

www.humberstoneshomes.co.uk

MONMOUTH ROAD, SMETHWICK



EXTENDED & SPACIOUS home with DOUBLE GARAGE to rear & SOUTHERLY aspect. 29ft lounge diner & 18ft breakfast kitchen. UPVC CONSERVATORY & separate utility to rear. Benefits from d/s shower room WITH SAUNAI! 5 GOOD size bedrooms & LARGE family bathroom. Blockpaved driveway to front. GCH & UPVC DG. EPC rating: D Ref: D1580

£289,950 Ref: D1580

NARROW LANE, HALESOWEN



WELL PRESENTED detached home with 24ft GARAGE. Potential to extend. REFITTED kitchen diner with built in appliances. 13ft lounge to front & d/s WC. 3 good size bedrooms & family bathroom on 1st floor. Lawn rear garden with PRIVATE SW aspect. UPVC DG & GCH fitted. EPC rating: E Ref: D1619

£237,500 Ref: D1619

WEYMOOR ROAD, HARBORNE



WELL PRESENTED & EXTENDED home in sought after road. GENEROUS ground floor ACCOMMODATION. 17ft Fitted kitchen, 21ft lounge, sep. dining room & further sitting room (POSSIBLE BED 4 & HAS WC OFF). REFITTED BATHROOM with white suite & 3 bedrooms. Gardens having SOUTHERLY ASPECT. Block paved parking to front. Majority UPVC DG & fascias. GCH. EPC rating: D Ref: D1612

£245,000 Ref: D1612

WHITLEY COURT RD, QUINTON



EXTENDED home with BLOCKPAVED driveway in SOUGHT AFTER tree lined road. REFITTED 16ft breakfast kitchen & 26ft lounge diner. REFITTED family bathroom & WC with white suite & 3 bedrooms. LOVELY garden having SOUTHERLY aspect. GCH & majority UPVC DG. EPC rating: D Ref: D1609

£215,000 Ref: D1609

ADMIRALS WAY, ROWLEY REGIS



LARGE detached home in CUL-DE-SAC position. 14ft lounge leading to separate dining room & UPVC CONSERVATORY. Kitchen to rear & d/s WC to front. Master bedroom with EN-SUITE shower room. 2 further bedrooms & family bathroom. 16ft garage with driveway. LARGE rear garden with private aspect. Majority UPVC DG & GCH. EPC rating: TBC Ref: D1604

£185,000 Ref: D1604

WOLVERHAMPTON RD, OLDBURY



WELL MAINTAINED 3 bed semi with SIDE GARAGE & OFF ROAD PARKING. Kitchen, Lounge & Separate Dining room. 3 bedrooms & bathroom on 1st floor. UPVC DG & GCH (combi boiler). Driveway and parking to front. WELL PROPORTIONED REAR GARDEN. EPC Rating: D Ref: D1613

£179,950 Ref: D1613

PARK AVENUE, ROWLEY REGIS



EXTENDED home with 3 DOUBLE bedrooms. REFITTED 12ft kitchen leading to CONSERVATORY. 18ft lounge diner & separate study. Fitted bedroom furniture in bedroom 1. REFITTED family bathroom & REFITTED shower room. GARAGE & driveway. UPVC DG & GCH fitted. EPC rating: D Ref: D1608

£167,950 Ref: D1608

FIRSBY ROAD, QUINTON



LARGE home with DRIVEWAY to front & garage to rear. 19ft8 lounge diner & 13ft breakfast kitchen with lean to conservatory to rear. Benefits from BOTH d/s bathroom & u/s shower room. 3 bedrooms on 1st floor. EXTENSIVE lawn rear garden with private aspect. GCH & maj UPVC DG. EPC rating: D Ref: D1614

£134,950 Ref: D1614

LONG LANE, HALESOWEN



LARGE terraced home with 3 bedrooms & ATTIC ROOM. Having 2 reception rooms, 10ft kitchen & REFITTED d/s bathroom. Master bedroom having EN-SUITE WC. Pleasant rear garden with SUMMER HOUSE. GCH & majority UPVC DG. EPC rating: E Ref: D1617

£129,950 Ref: D1617

HIGGINS LANE, QUINTON



SEMI DETACHED home with GARAGE. EXTENDED kitchen/Diner & Lounge. Bathroom & 3 bedrooms on 1st floor. UPVC double glazing & gas central heating fitted. Gardens to front and rear. EPC rating: TBC Ref: D1616

£127,500 Ref: D1616

WEST STREET, ROWLEY REGIS



NO UPWARD CHAIN - modern semi-detached home with DRIVEWAY/off road parking on CORNER PLOT position. 12ft lounge & modern fitted kitchen to rear. D/S WC. 2 DOUBLE bedrooms & shower room. Low maintenance rear garden. UPVC DG & GCH fitted. EPC rating: C Ref: D1618

£125,000 Ref: D1618

GLADYS ROAD, SMETHWICK



VERY WELL PRESENTED terraced home. REFITTED 12ft kitchen & 2 separate reception rooms. REFITTED downstairs bathroom with white suite. 2 DOUBLE bedrooms on 1st floor. UPVC DG & GCH fitted. Extensive lawn rear garden. EPC rating: D Ref: D1615

£119,950 Ref: D1615

HURST GREEN RD, HALESOWEN



NO UPWARD CHAIN - Modern bungalow with GARAGE & blockpaved driveway. Lounge leading to fitted kitchen. DOUBLE bedroom with wardrobes & bathroom. Gardens to front & rear. Gas central heating fitted. EPC rating: D Ref: D1611

£114,950 Ref: D1611

THRONE RD, ROWLEY REGIS



WELL PRESENTED home with BLOCKPAVED driveway to front. 14ft lounge with FITTED kitchen & utility room. REFITTED family bathroom with white suite. 3 GOOD SIZE bedrooms. Lawned rear garden with SW aspect. UPVC DG & GCH fitted. EPC rating: D Ref: D1610

£114,950 Ref: D1610

BRETT YOUNG CLOSE, HALESOWEN



WELL PRESENTED 1st floor apartment in CUL-DE-SAC position. Ideal access to Halesowen Town Centre & the M5. 17th open plan lounge diner/FITTED kitchen. 2 bedrooms & bathroom with WHITE SUITE. Gas central heating & UPVC DG fitted. Allocated parking. EPC rating: B Ref: D1606

£110,000 Ref: D1606

RIDGEFIELD ROAD, HALESOWEN



NO UPWARD CHAIN - Semi-detached home with SOUTHERLY rear garden & DRIVEWAY to front garden. Lounge to front & kitchen diner to rear plus d/s WC. 2 DOUBLE bedrooms & bathroom on 1st floor. UPVC double glazing fitted. GCH with Worcester boiler. EPC rating: D Ref: D1602

£110,000 Ref: D1602

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1

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2

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public & legal notices

LEGAL / PUBLIC NOTICES For convenience you may fax any advertising requirements to Marie Hogg on 01902 713146 or email marie.hogg@expressandstar.co.uk (remember to include a name/contact number for confirmation of receipt)

10 Personals

general

HAVE YOU CHECKED your advertisement today? We would respectfully remind advertisers that it is their responsibility to inform the publishers of any mistakes or inaccuracies on the first day of publication.

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KAREN 50, blonde hair, blue eyes, slim, GSOH, loving, caring, understanding, seeking similar male, 55-55. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 416989

KAREN 5ft 5ins, blonde hair, blue eyes, slim, seeks male. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 416337

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FEMALE, kind caring and loving seeks similar male for relationship text only all texts answered. Text only Mailbox No: 4655519

Hi my name is Zara. I am 5ft 4ins, slim build. I am looking for a genuine male aged between 45 and 50 with gosh who enjoys going out. Text only Mailbox No: 4362903

THELMA, 43, attractive blonde, seeks loving, honest, funny male to pamper and make happy. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 416979

DAWN attractive, easygoing, and dazzling, WLTM well built mature male for fun loving no strings romance. Status unimportant. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 416917

MID naughty forties female looking fun, thrills and discreet meets, give me a call, you won't be disappointed. Any age with own accommodation. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 409109

KAREN medium build, blonde hair 5ft 5ins, seeks male, 50-58, GSOH, loving, caring and understanding. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 415429

KAREN 5ft 5ins, blonde hair, blue eyes, slim, seeks male. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 416337

MARIA gorgeous leggy blonde seeks tall professional male for fun nights out, cosy nights in with plenty of TLC and romance. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 416861

Men seeking women

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TALL medium build male, GSOH, seeking partner, 40-50, likes theatre, music, dancing day or night meets. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 417391

GOTH-ROCK male, 30's, long dark hair, slim, tall and attractive seeks female or friends for pubs, clubs, gigs, and cinema. Text only to Mailbox No: 4722357

PROFESSIONAL guy 50's, well presented, humorous, easy going, looking for lady 40 plus who like me thinks the sparkle is missing from life. Text only to Mailbox No: 4351800

39YR old single dad, likes cosy nights in, seeks single, slim lady for fun relationship. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 396061

ADVENTUROUS 34yr old, slim, dark hair, creative, likes music, cycling, photography, seeks female for friendship. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 417235

MALE, 5' 7" slim, likes walks, cycling, eating out, seeks female 40 to 60 with similar interests. Text only to Mailbox No: 4714619

MALE, late 60s, 5' 6", loving, caring nature, seeks lady for LTR. Texts me Text only to Mailbox No: 4310699

SIMON white male, looking for relationship with fun to be with voluptuous, big black female. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 376863

DAVE genuine guy, 6ft, black hair, blue eyes, medium build, likes sports, gardening, music, seeks female with GSOH and genuine. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 388372

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SLIM attractive man 51, GSOH, WLTM lady 45-55 for evenings out and friendship. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 406259

PAUL 63, seeks attractive younger lady for discreet daytime fun. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 41721

DAVE genuine guy, 6ft, black hair, blue eyes, medium build, likes sports, gardening, music, seeks female with GSOH and genuine. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 388372

SINGLE dad, young 39, likes keep fit, walks, seeks slim lady, any age for fun, hopeful relationship. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 395747

MALE 67, smoker, solvent, OHAC, seeking feminine, voluptuous woman, 60-65 for days out, weekends away, holidays and more. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 417043

RICHARD 44, single, happy go lucky, likes pubs, clubs, socialising, seeking female for fun and friendship. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 416995

WIDOWER 70's, lonely, educated, well travelled, reliable, tactile, seeks fun, N/S lady for friendship and more. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 416841

VICTOR, retired, 5ft 8ins, professional, seeks N/S lady for fun, friendship and happy times. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 309157

NICK 52, 6ft, slim, genuine, seeking slim female for relationship. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 415881

39YR old single dad, likes cosy nights in, seeks female for fun times, maybe more. Single mum welcome. Tel No: 0906 500 3955 Box No: 395807

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VW sets new benchmark with the GTE

By John Griffiths

Volkswagen's Golf GTi is a legend: the benchmark by which for years other hot hatchbacks have been measured.

But what if you could have the GTi's combination of performance and practicality while carving a big chunk out of your running costs?

That's just what some drivers will get this month as they take delivery of the first GTEs. It's a hybrid, using a combination of petrol and electric motors to produce very similar levels of power and performance but with very substantial savings on fuel and therefore CO2 emissions.

Those who will benefit most, of course, are company car drivers who will find their 'benefit in kind' tax reduced to the lowest rate of five per cent. That will be increasingly important as HMRC plans will be hitting all company car users hard soon.

Under the bonnet is the well-proven 1.4 litre TFSI turbo-charged petrol engine working in combination with a 102PS electric motor. They can provide drive individually or together in which case you have a total of 204PS and hefty 350Nm of torque. That compares with 210PS for the GTi and 184PS for its diesel equivalent: no surprise, then, that the GTE does the benchmark 0 to 62mph dash in 7.6 seconds, compared to 7.3 and 7.5 respectively for its more conventional stable-mates.

Its list price is also competitive at £33,035, or £28,035 after the £5,000 government grant for plug-in hybrid cars.

Where there is a difference is fuel consumption – the official figures are an average 36.7mpg for the GTi, 62.8mpg for the GTD and a whopping 166mpg for the GTE based on the same computer-controlled test regime. That translates into a carbon dioxide emission rating of just 39g/km which is crucially important as it's the figure on which the government bases its VED and benefit in kind tax charges.

So, as well as no road tax to pay, company car drivers swapping from a similar petrol-powered machine with, for example, 180g/km of CO2, will find their tax liability falling from 31 per cent to just five per cent.

Now it's generally accepted that the phenomenal MPG figures quoted for hybrids are largely academic as the official test doesn't replicate real world conditions. But on the first part of my own unscientific test it was set to 'hybrid auto' mode whereby the electric motor helps out the petrol engine, automatically and seamlessly. The result was that the trip meter was showing an average mpg in the high 60s and still climbing while progress was almost silent.

On the second half I made what was, with hindsight, a mistake and switched to 'recharge battery' mode which cuts off electric assistance and means the petrol engine has to work harder. As a result, average economy dropped to a still acceptable mid 50s.

Functions

One of the four operating modes can be very easily controlled with just two finger strokes on the centre touch screen, which as usual also controls such functions as Sat-Nav, audio and driver information.

The GTE starts in 'E-Mode', which gives the torque characteristics of an electric motor ensures a quick getaway in any case. But there's a second 'GTE' button in the centre console which sets the car alight, unleashing the full 204PS potential for a very rapid overtaking manoeuvre – no different to changing down a gear or two, which most of us would do unconsciously in such circumstances. Staying in GTE mode, though, does mean you'll also rapidly sap your battery power and that rather defeats the object.

The GTE has a theoretical range of around 30 miles on electric power alone, which obviously stretches when it's assisted by the petrol engine.

The batteries can be recharged from any 13amp socket in around three hours 45 minutes, but you can cut that by 90 minutes if you have dedicated wallbox fitted at home or work. VW also supplies a lead to match the increasing number of fast chargers appearing at, for example, motorway services which cuts charging time still further.

So, depending on your driving style and type of journey, it really is not beyond the realms of possibility that you could be using the GTE for, say commuting, while hardly ever having to trouble the oil companies. You can remotely manage the GTE's charging from a smart phone app (provided you plugged the car in first, of course).

Inside the GTE, the only really difference to its conventional counterparts is the driver display which shows battery range, whether power is being used and the intensity of power regeneration. Probably the only reason that the GTE is marginally slower on the 0 to 62mph dash than the GTi/GTD is the 120kgs of lithium batteries. But the battery pack is installed low down and in front of the rear axle so it doesn't seem to affect the legendary roadholding and handling of its stablemates, at least on public roads.

The GTE is fitted as standard with a specially developed version of the Audi/VW six-speed DSG dual clutch transmission with the option of very quick manual changes using paddles behind the steering wheel.

The GTE sets a new benchmark for its combination of performance and economy, and the hybrid's launch makes it the only car to offer five different power sources – the others being petrol, diesel, pure electric and compressed natural gas, although the latter hasn't made it to these shores.



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Subaru's Outback is very smart combination

By Iain Dooley

If you're not a fully paid up member of the SUV club but still need to combine refinement with rugged driving ability, Subaru's new Outback crossover might be the best 4x4 for you.

Look past the Outback's modest visual updates and there's clear evidence that Subaru has been busy making its crossover-style wagon more competitive. The Japanese firm has made a number of welcome tweaks to the driving experience, with changes to the car's steering and suspension, resulting in sharper and more engaging on-road behaviour.

Subaru has also been busy in the Outback's cabin, as the overall ambience has been improved thanks to a significant uplift in quality.

New trim materials, a new fascia and seats help boost the car's premium class credentials. And alongside revised engines, Subaru is rolling out a suite of trick active safety measures, including an auto brake function, intelligent cruise control and a lane departure warning system.

Durable

Admired among the Subaru faithful for its no-nonsense personality, practical cabin and easy-on-the-eye looks, the Outback offers an interesting blend of (almost) go-anywhere abilities, plus durable mechanicals. This revised Outback is closer to its European rivals in the refinement and quality departments than ever before, although it remains a niche consideration for most buyers.

The Outback's generous size cabin ensures that all occupants benefit from a decent amount of head and legroom – especially in the back. Oddment space in the cabin is also good, while the car's boot is large enough to cope with the demands of most owners.

Thanks to the Outback's elevated ride height, cabin entry and loading, the boot is made that bit easier, too. And it wouldn't be right to omit reference to the car's 4x4 system, which is likely to be just as useful in the dry as in the wet.

As part of the Outback's update programme Subaru's engineers have made some welcome improvements under the car's skin.

Tweaks to refine how the Outback behaves on the road have resulted in a more engaging and refined driving experience, while the diesel-CVT auto combination proves to be a smooth and predictable combination. Factor in all-wheel drive and the Outback is a robust, all-weather package that's also brisk, yet imparts a high level of confidence and security.

Protect

Aside from the basic act of driving, Subaru has pushed the boat out with an all-singing, all-dancing active safety package, which combines intelligent cruise control, lane departure warning and an auto brake function to better protect you from the outside world than many of the Outback's pricier rivals.

No longer a cheap and cheerful alternative for rough and ready farmers, Subaru's Outback delivers a high level of refinement, comfort and practicality on a par with its premium European rivals.

Although well equipped in standard trim, you'll need to pick an auto transmission car if you want to benefit from Subaru's trick active safety package. Furthermore, diesel remains the smart choice if you want to reduce your tax and fuel outlay.

If the current crop of fashion-led SUVs bring you out in a rash, Subaru's polished, yet no-nonsense Outback offers a good blend of versatility, useful technology, all-weather practicality and understated style. It's not the last word in sporty handling, but it'll likely be more helpful when the roads are soaked or you need to tow a trailer than the latest soft-roader.

This car summed up in a single word: Loyal.

If this car was a Dog, it would be the loyal, willing and able family Labrador.

TESTED

Subaru Outback 2.0D SE Premium Lineartronic, £32,995

Engine: 2.0-litre diesel unit producing 150bhp

Transmission: CVT auto driving all four wheels

Performance: Top speed 124mph, 0-62mph in 9.9 seconds

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Uncharted waters for Tivs in new boss search

TIVIDALE chief Leon Murray admits they have entered somewhat uncharted territory in their search for Ian Long's replacement.

The Packwood Road outfit are hunting for a new manager after Long's decision to step down and join Alvechurch after next Thursday's JW Hunt Cup final.

Managerial appointments have been largely stress free at Tivi for almost a decade, with assistant managers stepping into the main job on the past three occasions. But Long is taking his entire backroom staff to Worcestershire, leaving general manager Murray and the rest of the committee a tougher task than usual.

"We are talking to five or six interested people – or should I say parties," said Murray. "That's because we are looking for sponsorship and have talked to a couple of people who would look to put money into the club. It's been a long, long time since we have been in this position and it is a big learning curve. I don't think it is just a case of appointing a new manager."

Under Long, Tivi finished an impressive eighth in their first season in Evo-Stik Division One South and Murray added: "We have got to get used to the fact we are no longer the big fish in the small pond but a very small fish in a much bigger pond."

Murray has, meanwhile, sought to soothe fears over the club's finances after Long claimed he had been told they were in financial trouble.

"We are not in financial difficulty," said Murray. "We have looked at the budget and set out the funds available."

Sir Jack will replace Jack Harris

MOLINEUX'S famous South Bank will be renamed after former chairman Sir Jack Hayward from next season.

And in a double tribute, a statue of the legendary former Wolves supremo could be built in Wolverhampton.

Steve Morgan announced the permanent tributes at last night's end of season awards.

The moves are sure to delight Wolves fans who had called for the club and the city to suitably honour the much-loved 91-year-old, who died in January.

The location of the statue has not yet been revealed but Morgan said Wolves were working closely with council chiefs on the plans, which will likely

see the statue placed in the city centre rather than outside Molineux where there are already statues of Billy Wright and Stan Cullis.

The South Bank, officially named the Jack Harris stand, will be called the Sir Jack Hayward stand from the start of the 2015-16 campaign.

An emotional Morgan fought back tears as he paid tribute to Sir Jack at the awards.

He said: "We are in discussions with the council about a statue in Wolverhampton. Sir Jack was a true hero of Wolverhampton."

"And it's a fitting tribute that the Jack Harris stand will be renamed the Sir Jack Hayward stand."

Morgan had to compose himself as he said: "I'm

getting upset just thinking about him. He was a great and eccentric character."

"The unbelievable emotion for Sir Jack at the Blackpool match and at his funeral is something that will live with us forever."

Morgan labelled Sir Jack's funeral, when up to 5,000 people crammed into Queen Square to watch the St Peter's Church service on a big screen, as 'Wolverhampton's state funeral'.

Jack Harris was chairman at Wolves in the late 1980s and part of the rescue consortium which saved the club in 1986.

The stand, funded by Sir Jack's millions, opened in 1993 as the final stage of redevelopment.

Wolves join Albion in chase for Ameobi

WOLVES have joined Albion in chasing Newcastle winger Sammy Ameobi as a potential replacement for Bakary Sako.

Boss Kenny Jackett is resigned to losing his 15-goal top scorer to the Premier League and 23-year-old Ameobi is among several options.

Ameobi is out of contract this summer and sources say he is looking for a move to secure regular first-team football to help his chances of nailing down an international place with Nigeria.

Albion are long-term admirers of the Geordie, while Everton are also said to be interested and Burnley are understood to have made him an offer of £14,000-a-week.

But despite the Premier League interest, Wolves are believed to be a serious option as the player has more chance of securing regular first-team football in the Championship.

Ameobi has played 53 League games for the Toon, but only 21 of those have been starts since making his debut in May 2011.

This season he has featured in 26 matches in all competitions, starting 16 times and scoring twice.

Earnings

Ameobi's earnings are higher than anyone else at Wolves apart from £25,000-a-week Sako.

But Wolves are prepared to relax the purse strings following the exit of high earners Roger Johnson, Jamie O'Hara and Kevin Doyle, plus the Mali international if he goes.

Sako will decide his future after playing for Mali in a double-header against Guinea-Bissau on June 18 and July 2.

The 27-year-old winger, who is out of contract next month, has offers from Albion and Villa among a clutch of clubs from the Premier League and abroad.

n Wolves are likely to delay an announcement on the expected release of Sam Ricketts until after the League One play-off final.

The 33-year-old defender, who is also out of contract, helped Swindon to Wembley where they will play Preston on Sunday, May 24.

● Former Wolves boss Dean Saunders has landed the manager's job at Chesterfield.

More old gold on Wolves new kit



Carl Ikeme, Benik Afobe, Tomasz Kuszczak and Richard Stearman model the new Wolves kit

IT'S a look that will please the traditionalists.

Gone are the black sleeves which were introduced this season as the club have opted for a design with more gold on the jerseys.

There is a wide black band

down the arms of the shirts and the socks, which is complemented by a gold stripe down the side of the shorts. New main sponsors Silverbug have their name and logo in black across the chests to match the shirts, having agreed

to change their brand name from red lettering. The new Puma design was unveiled at the start of the end of season awards dinner which was held at Telford International Centre. The shirts will cost £42 for adults.

Hitman Hatton is heading to racecourse

MULTI-TIME world boxing champion Ricky Hatton will again be top of the bill for an evening at Dunstall Racecourse in Wolverhampton next month.

"The Hitman" will spend the night in the Black Country on Friday June 19 to talk about his life and career, during a question and answer session.

The Mancunian ruled as the IBF, IBO and WBA 'super' title holder and is the only Englishman to have shared a ring with Floyd Mayweather Jnr and Manny Pacquiao.

He's headlined the major shows in Las Vegas and over here, too, which drew a then-record 55,000 fans to what is now the Etihad Stadium in Manchester.

The famed bodysnatcher lost just three times in 48 pro contests at light welterweight and welter, with two of those to Mayweather and Pacquiao.

He won legendary wars with Kostya Zsu, Luis Collazo and Juan Urango and was Ring Magazine's Fighter of the Year in 2005, when he held their title.

He took a long hiatus from the sport before an ill-fated return after three years in 2012, where he was counted out in the ninth round against Vyacheslav Senchenko.

Now an accomplished after-dinner speaker, 36-year-old Hatton's blend of storytelling and cracking jokes should raise plenty of laughs among the audience.

There will also be an auction, raffle and photo opportunities on the night. Tickets, which include a meal, start from £45. For information, call event organiser Ken Purchase on 07976 842 383.

Title charge on the cards, Goldbourne

WOLVES are primed for a Championship title charge next season, according to flying full-back Scott Goldbourne.

The defender, who played 27 times for Kenny Jackett's side in the 2014/15 campaign, believes automatic promotion has to be the aim after the disappointment of this year's play-off near miss.

The Molineux men fell agonisingly short of the top-six on goal difference following their return to the Championship, but Goldbourne has already set his sights high for next season.

"Getting promoted is the aim again – that always has to be the aim for this club if it's out of the Premier League," he said. "We want to make improvements and the manager will have a good idea of where he wants to strengthen."



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Hales grab first win of the season

SKIPPER Faisal Shahid was in a jubilant mood after leading Halesowen to their first win of the season over Old Elizabethans at the weekend – despite his own batting disappointment.

Shahid suffered a duck in only the second ball of the Halesowen innings – but the rest of his team rallied well to bounce back from two successive defeats.

He said: "Batting was very awkward at the start and it was definitely a toss to win."

Halesowen were wobbling at 30-3 early on, but the innings was steadied by Zain Shahid (29) and Will Barrett (45).

The fall of Shahid's wicket with the score on 75-4 sent Wes Griffiths in to join Barrett who then fell to an excellent catch on the deep square leg boundary, by Booth off the bowling of OE's South African overseas star Johann Smit, just when he was threatening to run riot.

Griffiths was then joined at the wicket by 15 year old Juhar Johal and took on the senior role in their partnership of 66 with some fine hitting until he too was caught in the deep by Booth for 44 this time off the bowling of Bastable.

The star of the show, however, was Johal who made an unbeaten half century in good time in only his second appearance for the first XI. His 54 not out, assisted by Dan Jeavons (22 no) enabled Halesowen to set a very respectable 232-6 from their allotted 50 overs.

Taking the field Dan Jeavons struck early to remove South African Smit for just 4 with the score at 16-1. Boyle and Major then put on 60 for the second wicket before Major fell to Zain Shahid for 26. With Boyle still at the crease OE's looked to be in with a chance of overhauling the Halesowen total until he fell for 64.

Halesowen face relegation after dropping to last

Nuneaton Junior League Round 2, Rugby

JUNIOR Swimmers travelled to Rugby for the second round of the Junior League.

Despite some fine performances the team ended the night in last place and now face a relegation battle in the final round in June to stay in the first division.

There were no first places on the night for the team. Individual swimmers finishing in second or third were Jacob Bailey, backstroke, Libby Hickman, freestyle, Sarah Elfrey, breaststroke and Anthony Demitry and Adam Ryan, butterfly.

The age nine boys relay grabbed third places in both medley and freestyle events with the team including Theo Evans, Jack Everton, Jacob Smith and William Walker.

The age 10 and under, girls team including Libby Cashmore and Tegan Turley also secured third place in the medley relay. Final point scores were Northampton 281, Blythe Barracudas 197, Stratford Sharks 174, Bilston 157, Braunstone 149, Halesowen 107.

Standing zones ruled out at Hawthorns

ALBION'S stadium boss has revealed 'safe standing' is impossible at The Hawthorns without completely rebuilding a stand.

Baggies' head of facility operations and development Mark Miles ruled out standing areas when he appeared at the latest meeting of the Albion Assembly – and gave details of a bizarre anthrax scare at the site of the club's new fanzone.

Fans quizzed Miles on the possibility of standing areas returning to the stadium.

But he said: "It's illegal, it's not allowed in this country by Government. On the back of the post-Hillsborough report, all stadia (in the Pre-

Football

mier League) have to be fully seated. There is a cost to put any safe or rail seating into the ground but there is this number circulated through the Football Supporters Federation that if you put what they call the safe standing/rail seating system in then you can get 1.4 or 1.5 (times) people into the stadium. That works in terms of space on the terracing, however you would need more turnstiles, more toilets, more exit gates, bigger vomitories, bigger concourses and greater gangways.

"The only way to achieve that is to knock the stand down and rebuild it. So the rail seating system – unless you rebuild a stand, which costs a lot of money – simply won't happen."

Meanwhile, Albion have been given the all-clear after material from the club's new fanzone was tested for possible anthrax pores.

The Baggies had to send material from the former Hawthorns pub, on the corner of Halford Lane and Birmingham Road, for testing after discovering horse hair during a demolition.

But the tests have come back clear and work on refurbishing the historic building is continuing.

HALES FIRST TIME CUP WIN

Whitchurch 6 Old Halesonians 52

THE North Midlands Cup final day at Dudley Kingsford was a great setting for the Hales faithful.

Hales had never won this title since its inception in 1972.

A minute's silence was agreed to mark the sudden passing of club member and supporter Phil Dempsey, Father of Tom, who was playing loose head prop.

Hales attacked from the kick off but it was clear Whitchurch were never going to give up their opportunity of an upset.

A nervous start by Hales allowed Whitchurch a penalty which they took to lead 3-0.

Hales then put their mark on the gamewhen the ball was fed to Carl Robinson at centre who sliced through the opposition, the try converted by Chris Hooper.

The Hales side started to dominate with telling runs by forwards Tom King, Guy Field, Loz Breese and Tom Jordan.

Man of the match Carl Robinson scored his second try, converted by Hooper.

Dominance

A short time later injury struck Hales' hooker Pete Fitzgerald who left the field with two broken ribs.

Replacement Bobby Moxon immediately got involved in the fray.

This made no difference to the dominance of Hales who again worked the phases with Evans and Jordan leading the charge and props Matt Young and Tom Dempsey in regular contact. Just a few minutes later wing Luke Smith received the ball out wide, sprinted past the defenders for a try.

Hales attacked at will, backs Williams, centre Brothers Carl and Andy Robinson supported by Hooper caused problems for the Whitchurch defence.

A wide ball to wing Warren Oliver saw him slip through the defence for a try converted by Hooper.

Whitchurch forced another penalty which was converted. However, their hopes were dashed when Oliver again on the wing scored, Hooper



Warren Oliver goes over for one of the tries as Halesowen dominate the game to win the cup

converted. Breeze found himself in oceans of space for a try which he converted himself.

More Hales replacements joined the game, Chris Harris for Nathan Jones and Chris Deeks for the prop forward, Matt Young and Joe Oxford for Oliver on the wing.

Again Hales attacked at will, Smith on the end of some great inter-passing with Evans, Williams and the Robinsons scored.

The final move of the game saw Smith again out wide receiving a ball in his own half.

He out sprinted two defenders to run the length of the field for hat-trick of tries, converted by Holloway on the final whistle for a well-de-

served victory. The Hales team and supporters were ecstatic with the result, Captain Tom Jordan received the cup on behalf of the club and the North Midlands Award for player of the game went to Carl Robinson.

Team Manager Simon Hussey paid tribute to the first team squad and the club for their efforts throughout the season.

He said, "To finish fifth in a very competitive National League and cap that with our first ever silverware in the Cup is a brilliant end to our season."

The club AGM is at the clubhouse on May 14 at 7.30 pm. The players' dinner on Friday July 3.

Villa fans in rush to get Cup tickets

HARDENED Villa fans queued from the early hours as the scramble to snap up precious FA Cup final tickets reaches fever pitch.

The ticket office queue snaked around the Villa Park car park on Tuesday morning, packed with supporters eager to snare a seat for the May 30 clash against Arsenal at Wembley.

Some arrived at 3.30am, with one group even bringing a disposal barbecue to cook breakfast.

The rush was prompted by a change in ticketing criteria which saw supporters with an eight-game booking history from this season able to buy tickets.

That criteria changed again today to a seven-game booking history and with the club's 25,000 allocation fast selling out, further big queues were expected.

Meanwhile, teenage Villa star Jack Grealish has rejected the offer of a first senior Republic of Ireland call-up.

The 19-year-old was widely tipped to be included in the squad that Ireland manager Martin O'Neill named for games with England and Scotland. But his name was conspicuous by its absence in the 33-strong list when it was eventually made public.

The Birmingham-born midfielder can also play for England but has already represented Republic of Ireland at under-21 level.

Speaking at a press conference in Dublin, former Villa supreme O'Neill said: "I spoke to both Jack and his father, and I think Jack just didn't want to make his mind up at this stage. He wanted to complete the season at Aston Villa – there are some important games for them coming up – and he wants to make his decision at some time in the future."

Albion eyeing up striker Gignac

ALBION are weighing up a swoop for France international striker Andre-Pierre Gignac.

Baggies boss Tony Pulis and assistant Dave Kemp ran the rule over the 29-year-old, who plays for Marseille, against Monaco on Sunday night.

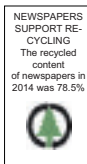
Gignac failed to add to his 20-goal tally for the season and was taken off after 56 minutes to be replaced by Belgian Michy Batshuayi.

Pulis tried to sign Gignac for Stoke, who have maintained an interest.

Gignac, who has scored 58 goals in 153 games for Marseille, has more lucrative offers in Russia but is said to not be keen on going there.

★★★

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